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AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS

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TENNESSEE GAS

Councilors call public hearing on gas pipe

By Michael Ballway
mballway@turley.com

Proponents of a new natural gas pipeline in Agawam didn't have to answer residents' questions at a City Council workshop meeting last month, and that didn't sit well with Susan Grossberg.

"We all left extremely frustrated, particularly because we were not allowed to participate," Grossberg told the City Council on Monday.

She will have her chance to speak next Monday, when the council hosts a public hearing on the proposal. Council President Christopher Johnson said he was bound by the town charter to call the hearing after Grossberg pre-

PIPELINE ❙ page 12

HIGH SCHOOL



From left, Loredona Randazzo, Jailene Ortiz, Olivia Frogameni and Brooke Szafran review their scripts before the start of the sixth annual Poetry Out Loud contest at Agawam High School last Thursday. All seniors, they served as emcees, offering humor as well as information about the poets and the poems students read as scores were tallied. PHOTOS BY MIKE LYDICK



Serena Croteau, a junior, practices reciting "The Obligation to Be Happy" by Linda Palstan for the initial round of the Poetry Out Loud competition.

Students compete for top honors in poetry contest

By Mike Lydick
mlydick@turley.com

For the sixth year, a select group of AHS students stepped up to the microphone to recite classic and contemporary poems they had memorized line-by-line and word-for-word.

And they did it on stage in front of classmates, teachers, and administrators. They were part of a national performance competition for high school students called the Poetry Out Loud contest. Students recited works they had selected from an anthology of more than 900 classic and contemporary poems.

Judges evaluated student performances on criteria that included voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, and accuracy. The competition – which starts in the classroom — uses a pyramid structure. From a group of 150 students — freshmen through seniors — who first participated at the classroom level,15 contestants advanced to the school-wide contest last Thursday.

Round 1narrowed contestants

POETRY ❙ page 11

DARCY DAVIS, 1926-2020

Band alumni, seniors mourn their 'Music Man'

By Michael J. Ballway
mballway@turley.com

Agawam's own "Music Man," Darcy B. Davis Jr., died last week at age 93.

Davis was the band director at Agawam High School from 1955 to 1990, building the "Marching Mohawks" into a national award-winning band and staging more than 20 Broadway-style musicals. After retirement, he organized and directed a chorus at the Agawam Senior Center, in addition to maintaining the "Music Room" at the Senior Center, an archive of the arts in Agawam. He was active in this endeavor for several years, and kept the town updated on chorus events and old marching band reminiscences with regular "Notes from the Music Room" in the Agawam Advertiser News.

At this week's City Council meeting, several councilors paid tribute to Davis, including Council President Christopher Johnson.

"Darcy left an indelible mark

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SCHOOL COMMITTEE

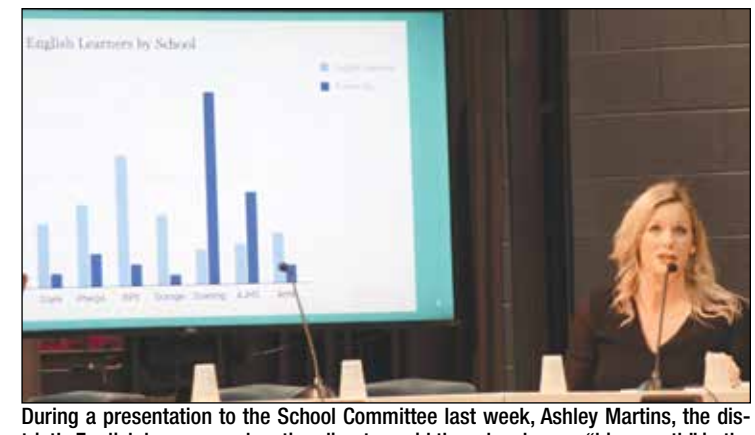
Language learners reflect growing diversity

By Mike Lydick
aan@turley.com

The number of students in Agawam whose native language isn't English has nearly doubled since 2014.

"We've seen a big growth in English learners during the past six years," said Ashley Martins, the district's English language education director, during a presentation to the School Committee last week.

Martins said Agawam is becoming a more diverse community, and its school population reflects that change. The district currently has students from 18 countries who speak at least 20 different native languages that are not English. Their families came from war-torn countries, were displaced from Puerto Rico by Hurricane Maria, or came to the U.S. seeking a better life for themselves and their children.



During a presentation to the School Committee last week, Ashley Martins, the district's English language education director, said there has been a "big growth" in the number of students whose native language isn't English. PHOTO BY MIKE LYDICK

She said students whose na-

LANGUAGE ❙ page 16



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Thunderbirds evening aids kids' causes

Agawam residents are invited to meet and mingle with the Springfield Thunderbirds next week to benefit Lions Club charities.

The Agawam Lions Club, together with Kaptain Jimmy's Restaurant & Distillery, 916 Suffield St., Agawam, will host a Springfield Thunderbirds Celebrity Night from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10.

Fans of the hockey team will have the opportunity to "meet and greet" with Boomer and players. The Springfield Thunderbirds bus, courtesy of King Ward Coach Lines, will also be on site. The evening also includes raffles, music and giveaways . A portion of the evening's proceeds will be donated to the Agawam Lions Foundation Inc.'s Children's Services Fund. No purchase is necessary, and all are invited.

The mission of the Children's Services Fund is to provide assistance to local children, their families and caregivers, as well as the schools and support staff that are entrusted with their well-being. The Agawam Lions are committed to addressing issues such as hunger, health and well-being matters, providing basic supplies for home and school, among other things.

For more information, visit www.agawamlions.org.

Q & AGAWAM

Citizenship awardee ready to be part of St. Pat's events

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

He's a father, a veteran and a business owner in town. Next month, Anthony Boido will also be Agawam's Citizenship Award winner marching in the 2020 Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade. We had a chat this week to get to know him.



Anthony Boido

Why you should know him: Grew up in Agawam and has lived in town for 24 years; started TNT Event rentals in 2012; Citizenship Award winner for the 2020 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Favorite thing about Agawam: The community, the people, everyone knows each other and gets along. It's really nice, and people are able to rely on each other.

Q: How did you receive the Citizenship Award?

A: I'm not a part of the actual committee, so I'm not sure how it works, specifically. We had a few banquets, I prepared and gave a speech, so there was some celebration. I received the award for donating back to the community, through service work and money donations. I help set up events for people, I send gift certificates and gift baskets, I donate to different organizations like the American Cancer Society. I never expected it, I never thought I'd receive this and I truthfully didn't know about it until I was nominated. I'm very glad about that.

Q: Have you been to the parade before?

A: Yeah, I've been to the parade a few times, I enjoy going when I can. One of my favorite things is seeing the police officers and the fire personnel in the parade. I'm a big supporter of law and emergency personnel. I have a lot of respect for them. It's nice to see them represented in the parade. It's a big celebration and that's always the best part about being there, so that's something I'm looking forward to this year.

Q: Have you ever been in the parade before?

A: No, never. This will be the very first time for me. I haven't ever marched in it before. We haven't had any meetings for it, we just met up for the banquets and receiving the award. I know that there will be a float, but I have no clue or any idea about the float. I haven't heard anything about it, and I don't even know where to start asking. I'm excited to be walking in it, because it's my first time and I won the Citizenship Award. It'll be a fun time I'm sure.

Q: Where do you work?

A: I work at, manage, and own my own company. It's called TNT Tents and Table Rentals, but I'll be changing the name pretty soon. It's not a big change really; it'll be called TNT Event Rentals from now on, because we really do more than tents and tables now. We set up for a lot of things, we have large tents for catering and hosting parties. We also offer tables, of course, to sit the people needed or to have enough room for everything. We do stage, dance floors, concert setups, food and concession tables, and other types of setup that can be needed at an event.

Q: What's something surprising that happens behind the scenes?

A: Well, we usually host and work for the same types of companies or set up the same events. Everyone has a need for snack and refreshment tables, and tents for caterers. I think that the most surprising thing would be when we get events outside of our normal rentals and events. We help to set up table and tents at TV show recordings, movie recordings, food and catering tents for parties either local or private. Although we mainly stay in Massachusetts because we're stationed in Western Massachusetts, but we have also gone to the Cape, we've traveled to Boston, and we've also gone north of New York City for an event.

Q: What are some of your hobbies?

A: Well, one of my hobbies would be starting my morning with a workout. I try to stay fit. I really enjoy fitness and I'm dedicated to the workouts I do. I've gotten accustomed to the routine I have, and it's a good one. Besides that, I enjoy fitness programs at other points of the day as well, I really enjoy being outside, going to the gym, and definitely skiing. These things all coincide with traveling, but besides just going back and forth to events I greatly enjoy traveling. Skiing and traveling are probably two of my most favorite hobbies, I enjoy them a lot.

Q: What is the Citizenship Award?

A: It's an award that is given to someone in the community who has given back to the community a substantial amount. I've given a lot to the community and I will continue to give back to the community. We have a great community with wonderful people and this is something my company and I will continue to do this. It's something I stand by and definitely won't stop doing. It's important to give back to the community the surrounds and supports you. It's a good feeling, a lot of wonderful people have received the award, and the fact that I was able to receive it is amazing.

Q: What's it like to be Irish in Agawam?

A: Well, I'm not really sure, to be honest. I don't know a lot of the culture or heritage; I'm only slightly Irish. I know a few things, and I do enjoy the things I know, but my knowledge is slim. ... It's an honor to be a part of the parade this year and see what it's all about.

Whom should we interview next? Who has an interesting job, hobby, or story to tell in Agawam and Feeding Hills? Suggest a "Q & Agawam" subject by emailing aan@turley.com.

Early voting dates set for primary election

Agawam and Feeding Hills residents will be able to cast early ballots in the week before the March 3 presidential primary election.

Polls will be open at the Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, Feb. 24-28, with additional evening hours until 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27. Any registered voter in town may participate. Unlike absentee voting, this early voting period does not require a medical, religious or travel-based exemption.

Registered voters have the option to request an early voting ballot through the mail. Applications are available at www.sec.state.ma.us/ele. They may be filled out and mailed to Town Clerk, 36 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001.

Early voting in person is just like voting on Election Day, except that residents of all precincts will vote at the Senior Center. Voters arrive during the designated hours, check in with the warden and cast their ballots. Once someone has voted early, he or she will be marked on the voter rolls to prevent double-voting.

Participants in early voting, like voters on March 3, will be able to vote in the presidential primary election, as well as the primary for the special state senate election. Registered members of the Democratic, Republican, Libertarian and Green-Rainbow parties can vote on their party's ballot; political independents ("unenrolled") can choose to vote on any party's primary ballot.

Those who do not vote in the early voting period can cast their ballots on March 3. Polls will be open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the usual polling places in Agawam and Feeding Hills.

The last day to register to vote, or change parties, in time for the March 3 election is Wednesday, Feb. 12. The clerk's office on the first floor of Town Hall will be open until 8 p.m. that day.

For more information, contact the town clerk's office at 413-786-0400, ext. 8215.

Pajama drive continuing at town library

The Agawam Public Library will partner with the Boston Bruins to collect new children's and teen pajamas from Feb. 1 to March 15.

These pajamas will then be given to local Department of Children and Families agencies and distributed to families who need them. Pajamas may be dropped off after Feb. 1 in the Children's Room at the library, 750 Cooper St., Agawam.







Landscaper gets zone change for business garage

By Michael Ballway
mballway@turley.com

A proposed zone change off Main and Meadow streets brought several neighbors to public hearings over the past two weeks, and none of them had anything negative to say about it.

The City Council on Monday approved changing Anthony Verteramo's 9½-acre property behind Meadow Street from several different zones — agricultural, industrial A and residence A-2 — to business A throughout. Verteramo asked for the change so that he can build a garage to serve as a headquarters for his landscaping business.

Rich Zielinski, one of Verteramo's Main Street abutters, told the Planning Board on Jan. 16 that he welcomed the zone change.

"He's really cleaned it up," Zielinski said. "There's never been a problem there [for] 45 years."

Councilor George Bitzas said he has attended several zone change public hearings during his time on the council, and "this is, I think, the first time that everybody's supporting" the land owner.

The proposed all-metal garage would stand 13 feet tall at its sides and about 16 feet at the top of the roof, with width dimensions of 30 by 40 feet. Such a building would not have been allowed in a lot with less than 100 feet of road frontage under the previous zoning.



Anthony Verteramo speaks with members of the Agawam Planning Board about his zone change request last month. PHOTO BY MICHAEL BALLWAY

The garage would be 90 feet from the nearest residence on Meadow Street, and 600 feet along the driveway from Main Street. The driveway to the property connects to Main Street just south of the former Pride gasoline station. The site of the garage is currently occupied by a storage shed and container.

Several neighbors and family friends also spoke at the City Council meeting, vouching for Verteramo and his "meticulous" care of his property.

"I try to be a good neighbor down there," Verteramo said.

Verteramo's family has owned the property since 1986, and the landscaping business has been in operation for 33 years, he told the City Council. The land has been used as a nursery for plants used in his landscaping jobs. The landscaping business was formerly based at 319 Meadow St.

Verteramo said the garage will be for storage of his vehicles and tools only. Clients will not be visiting the property, nor will he perform any industrial activity other than routine maintenance of his own equipment.

He said he recently planted 100 arbor vitae bushes along his property line to shield neighbors from the view of the garage.

Southwick St. subdivision

At their Jan. 16 meeting, the Planning Board also approved a preliminary plan for 13 lots off Southwick Street, in a 10.74-acre farmland parcel between the Polish American Club and the Charter Oak Drive-Nicole Terrace neighborhood.

Several abutters expressed their worries about the project. Plans call for an 1,100-foot subdivision road to start at Southwick Street and end at what is currently a dead-end on Nicole Terrace. Residents of Nicole Terrace said they worried about increased traffic on their road, and about having more residential traffic turning on to Southwick Street, which they said has limited visibility.

They also questioned the developer's plan to manage stormwater on the property, with a retention basin at the southern end of the development near Nicole Terrace.

Officers from the Polish American Club also had concerns about the project, as residents on the eastern side of the new subdivision street would directly abut the club, which hosts live music events.

Juried photo show on display, reception planned for Feb. 21

The upstairs gallery and glass cases at the Agawam Public Library contain 100 photos from 42 photographers that were juried into the Friends of the Agawam Public Library 10th Open Juried Photography Show. The show is on exhibit now and runs through Feb. 28. Brochures on a table in the gallery area describe each entry in the show.

For the first time ever, entries were submitted by the Agawam High School Photography Club. The seven student entries were all juried into the show. Mary Alice McQuade, a patron of the arts and a Friends board member, sponsored the student entries.

A reception and photographer awards evening, with music and light refreshments, is planned for 7-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21. Twenty-one awards and a photographer's choice award will be presented, along with a discussion and critique by the jurors and judges, Sue Fenton and Kevin Fay.

Both the show and the reception and awards night are free and open to the public. The Agawam Public Library is at 750 Cooper St., Agawam.

Entries were judged in four categories: creative, nature, photojournalism and pictorial. The photographers in the show come from Massachusetts (Agawam, Belchertown, Chicopee, East Longmeadow, Feeding Hills, Hampden, Longmeadow, Palmer, Russell, South Hadley, Springfield, West Springfield, Westfield and Wilbraham) and Connecticut (Granby, Simsbury and Windsor Locks).



"Water's Edge" by Sylvia Pyzocha of Palmer was named Best in Show at the Open Juried Photography Show at the Agawam Public Library. SUBMITTED PHOTO

K of C to serve fish on Fridays in Lent

The Agawam Knights of Columbus will host fish dinners at Sacred Heart Parish on Friday evenings in Lent.

They will serve baked fish, French fries, coleslaw, beverage and dessert 5-7 p.m. Fridays, Feb. 28, March 6, 13, 20 and 27, and April 3, at the church at 1061 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. The cost is $10 per person. Take-out is available.

Proceeds will assist the Knights of Columbus in their corporal and spiritual works of mercy, such as pro-life works, supporting churches, etc.

Catholic women meet Monday night

The Catholic Women's Club of Agawam will hold its next monthly meeting Monday, Feb. 10. It will be held in the Father Joyce Room at the St. John the Evangelist Parish Center, 833 Main St., Agawam.

The evening will begin at 6:30 with refreshments, to be followed by the club's business meeting at 7. The game night will follow and members will break into small groups to play "Left, Right, Center." Those attending need to bring quarters to participate.

Any Catholic woman residing in Agawam or member of any Catholic parish in Agawam is welcome to attend.

Bowling to help Lions children's fund

All are invited to "strike" up some fun while supporting a great cause Saturday, Feb. 8, at Agawam Bowl.

A $20 donation to the Agawam Lions Foundation Inc. Children's Services Fund will buy bowling shoes, lunch and three strings of play. The fundraiser runs 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the bowling alley at 359 Walnut Street Ext., Agawam.

Before the event, bowlers should complete a registration form, which can be found at www.agawamlions.org/events. Bowlers can ask friends and family to sponsor them to raise additional funds.

For more information, visit www.agawamlions.org.

Musical couple to give romantic concert

Just in time for Valentine's Day, the Agawam Cultural Council's Applause Series will present a program of romantic music for guitar, mandolin and cuatro this Friday, Feb. 7.

Romanza, a free performance by Connecticut husband-and-wife duo Judy Handler and Mark Levesque, will begin at 7 p.m. in the Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam. Doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Handler and Levesque will transport the audience to different parts of the world with lilting Venezuelan vals, rhythmic Brazilian bossa novas, a sizzling tango from Argentina, Puerto Rican popular music played on the national instrument, beautiful Peruvian and Mexican love songs, as well as exciting flamenco music and plaintive Sephardic music from Spain.

The concert is sponsored by TD Bank. The Agawam Cultural Council also thanks the Agawam Special Police, Elaine Carlson, OMG Inc., TD Bank, and Way Finders Inc. for their support as Applause Series season sponsors.

Additional information on the Applause Series is available at the Agawam Cultural Council web site, www.agawamcc.org. The Senior Center can be reached at 413-821-0604.

The Agawam Cultural Council is an all-volunteer agency funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Its charge is to bring engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.

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Colleen Coronation, award banquet is this Saturday

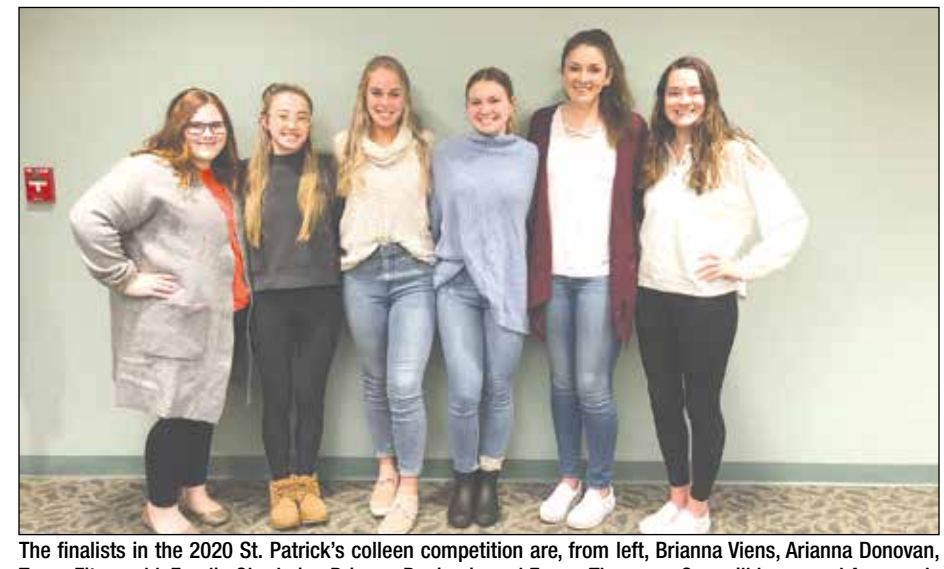
Six young ladies and three award winners from Agawam will participate in the Agawam St. Patrick's Committee's Colleen Coronation this weekend.

The coronation will be held Saturday, Feb. 8, at Oak Ridge Country Club in Feeding Hills. A social hour begins at 5 p.m., with dinner at 6. Advance tickets are required, at $40. Tickets may be ordered from Laurie O'Connell by emailing Laurie822@comcast.net or texting 413-519-1071.

All the finalists are seniors at Agawam High School: Brianna Benjamin and Emma Thomson, 18, and Arianna Donovan, Tessa Fitzgerald, Emelie Oberheim and Brianna Viens, all 17.

One will be chosen as the town's 2020 colleen, to represent Agawam during the many events of "Irish Season," culminating in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade on March 22. The rest will serve as the colleen's court. The colleen and her court will ride in the town's parade float.

The coronation will also honor the 2020 parade marshal and winners of the Anne Sullivan Award and Citizenship Award.



The finalists in the 2020 St. Patrick's colleen competition are, from left, Brianna Viens, Arianna Donovan, Tessa Fitzgerald, Emelie Oberheim, Brianna Benjamin and Emma Thomson. One will be named Agawam's colleen on Feb. 8; the other five will form her court. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Parade marshal



Laurie O'Connell

Laurie O'Connell, the 2020 parade marshal, was born in Springfield and moved to Feeding Hills when she was 6. Her parents still live in the house where she grew up with her older sister, Lisa, and younger brother, Mike. She and her husband John have lived in Feeding Hills since 1990 and raised their two children, Kaitlyn and Sean, there. She has two grandchildren and cherishes every moment they spend with her.

O'Connell has worked 15 years as a paralegal specialist for the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. She loves her job and finds being part of the adoption process particularly rewarding. O'Connell also works part-time for Hardwick Winery in Hardwick, Mass., and helps them when they set up shop at the Big E.

She joined the St. Patrick's Committee over six years ago, and has held positions on the Board of Directors for four years, as secretary, vice president and treasurer. O'Connell has also served on the Events Committee and the Colleen Committee for six years, where she currently serves as co-chair with Mary Jo Safford.

Anne Sullivan Award



Kay Benson

Kay Benson is this year's Anne Sullivan Award winner. She moved to Agawam in 1967 and is the proud mother of six children, all Agawam High School graduates; she also has 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Benson graduated from Elms College with a bachelor of arts in inter-departmental studies, including social services, business and psychology, and is a retired recreation director, having served the residents of Heritage Hall Nursing Home for 35 years. She has been an active volunteer, including working with Rainbows for All God's Children and Beginning Experience support groups helping children and adults experiencing difficulty with separation, divorce or the death of a loved one.

Benson volunteers at her church counting the collection money, serving meals at Loaves and Fishes, as an extraordinary minister providing a communion service and reciting the rosary at the nursing home. She feels she truly has been blessed by having received more than she has given during these programs.

Benson is an active member of the Agawam Catholic Women's Club, Agawam Garden Club, the John Boyle O'Reilly Club and Agawam St. Patrick's Committee. She and her husband Frank are avid domestic and international travelers. They plan to travel more now that Frank is newly retired.

Benson has been a member of the Agawam St Patrick's Committee since 2014, and currently serves on the Board of Directors, also bringing her great ideas and unstoppable work ethic to the Float Committee.

Citizenship Award

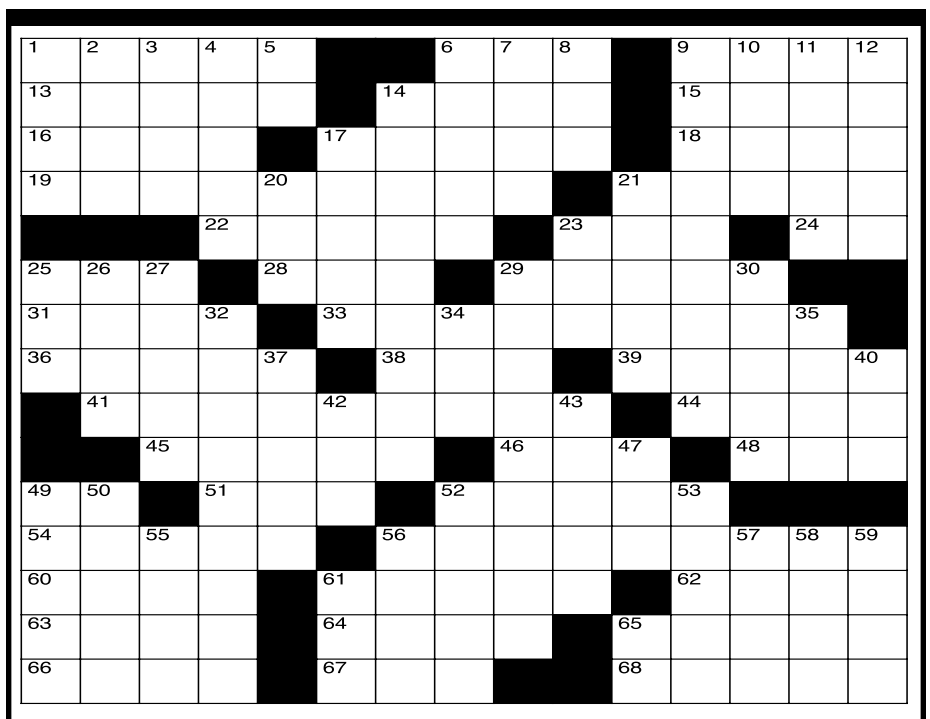


Anthony Boido

Anthony Boido, the 2020 Citizenship Award winner, has been a resident of Agawam for 25 years, graduating from Agawam High School in 2005. After attending Springfield Technical Community College, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, taking on a field career in air transportation. He received his heavy equipment and CDL licenses while in the service. He was deployed three times, once to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan. Boido's son was born 13 days after his third deployment.

Boido owns TNT Tent and Table Rentals which, for eight years, has been located on Walnut Street Extension in Agawam. He and his company have been helpful in multiple ways for giving back to Agawam and surrounding communities. He has supported such organizations such as Kane's Crusade, Lace 'Em Up for Lexi, Griffin's Friends, many veteran organizations and Jessy's Fight, which raises funds for Baystate Health Foundation and the D'Amour Center for Cancer Care. He has also raised and donated thousands of dollars to the American Cancer Society through the Rays of Life program. One of his largest contributions has been to Shriners Hospital for Children, raising thousands of dollars in just a short time.

Boido was recently engaged and will be married in May 2020. His son, Liam, age 7, will stand next to his father as best man on that special day. Beside a busy work schedule, Anthony likes to start every morning with a workout. Most importantly, he enjoys spending time with his family and friends. When he has time, some of his favorite activities are to ski and travel.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Indicates number of days
6. When you hope to get there
9. Hairstyle
13. Black (Spanish)
14. Expresses pleasure
15. Away from wind
16. Tech pros organization
17. Wile E. Coyote is familiar with it
18. Clean
19. Saints' signal caller
21. A way to hunt
22. Poetries
23. Automobile
24. Secondary school (abbr.)
25. Indicates before
28. Male parent
29. Short-billed rails
31. It pays to keep yours
33. On occasion
36. David __, US playwright
38. Slang for cigarette
39. Vaccine developer
41. Returned to health
44. Toni Morrison novel
45. Period between eclipses
46. Veterans battleground
48. Gang
49. A radio band
51. Jaws of a voracious animal
52. Elaborate garments
54. Chinese province
56. Checks
60. Horizontal passage
61. Steep hillsides
62. Fertility god
63. Dried-up
64. Signs a name
65. __ Winger, actress
66. German river
67. Gov't lawyers
68. Take something somewhere

CLUES DOWN

1. __ Blyton, children's author
2. Colleague
3. "The African Queen" writer
4. Crater on the moon
5. Toward
6. Overhang
7. Identifies something close at hand
8. Sign language
9. Unbroken views
10. Ancient Greek City
11. Stretch out to grasp
12. Alcohols that are unfit for drinking
14. Humorous stories
17. Long song for a solo
20. Barrels per day (abbr.)
21. City of Lights
23. A place to sleep
25. Advanced degree (abbr.)
26. The back
27. Furniture-makers Charles and "Ray"
29. Songs to a lover
30. Gland secretion
32. 10 meters
34. Disfigure
35. Stores grain
37. Sacred book of Judaism
40. Catch
42. Promise
43. Challenges
47. Russian space station
49. Banking giant
50. Served as an omen
52. Drenches
53. Type of sword
55. Minor planet
56. Messenger ribonucleic acid
57. Japanese ankle sock
58. Obtain in return for services
59. Waste matter
61. A proposal to buy at a specified price
65. Unit of loudness

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 10

Chamber lunch to give business tips

WEST SPRINGFIELD — The West of the River Chamber of Commerce will hold a Lunch and Learn event, "The State of Small Business in Western Mass.," this month.

The lunchtime talk, co-hosted with the East of the River Chamber of Commerce, is 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at Springfield Country Club in West Springfield. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn how small businesses can deal with rising labor costs and new laws in Massachusetts, and learn what resources are available to support local businesses.

Keynote speaker Beth Yohai, vice president of business development for AIM (Associated Industries of Massachusetts) HR Solutions is a broad-based human resources professional with more than 25 years of experience developing and aligning HR strategies to support business goals and objectives. Before joining AIM HR Solutions, she owned and operated a successful small business in Massachusetts.

The premier sponsor for this event is OMG Inc. of Agawam. Tickets are $35 for Chamber members and $45 for non-members. Sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information, visit westoftheriverchamber.com or call the West of the River Chamber of Commerce office at 413-426-3880.

Boating classes begin next month

WEST SPRINGFIELD — The Springfield Power Squadron will hold safe boating classes starting March 4, open to members as well as the general public.

Courses are held 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays for eight to 12 weeks, at West Springfield Middle School, 31 Middle School Drive, West Springfield.

Students pay for textbooks, materials, and a national fee, if applicable. Registration can be made at the door, with payment at that time or prepayment to reserve a seat. The three scheduled courses are the ABC basic boating course, Boat Handling (the normal follow-on course to ABC), and Cruise Planning. Classes are taught by experienced and knowledgeable instructors.

The United States Power Squadron is a non-profit, boating educational and social organization dedicated to making the water safer and more enjoyable for recreational boaters, and the public at large. For additional information on these classes please contact Kevin Abbey at 413-636-4804 (leave a message) or rav131en@aol.com.

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Schools & Youth

DARE graduates warn about health effects of vaping

By Shelby Macri
smacri@turley.com

Half of the fifth graders of Roberta G. Doering School participated in a graduation last week from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program. The other half of the fifth graders start DARE in February, making their graduation in June.

The master of ceremonies was Officer John Field, serving his 20th year with the Doering School. Every year since 1987, DARE has taught Agawam middle schoolers about drug and violence prevention. Field meets with the kids every week to teach them about cigarettes, tobacco, marijuana, alcohol and violence. The curriculum focuses on preventative measures and dives into subjects like peer pressure and the science of addiction.

The students entered an essay contest at the end of the program, and the three winners were announced at the Jan. 31 graduation ceremony. The winners, Bella Shunaman, Talia Oliveira and Iraj Ahmed, all read their essays aloud at the ceremony after other speakers said a few words. The girls started getting the audience thinking about all that the DARE program teaches and does. Dignitaries speaking at the ceremony included Mayor William Sapelli, School Superintendent Steven Lemanski, Police Eric Gillis and Field. Other officers attending included Officer Jeff Hichborn, Officer Taylor Hartmann, and Sgt. Steven Grasso.

"This is such an important event, it really is," Sapelli said. "It's important in a lot of ways. We started this program back in '87, and I was here as the assistant principal. I remember those days. We're very fortunate to have this program."

Sapelli praised the work of Agawam Police, including the school resource officers who work in the school system. These officers build relationships with the kids, starting with the DARE program. It gives students a chance to see a side of law enforcement that doesn't include making an arrest or some other negative interaction.

DARE also keeps police and students current on the latest trends in illegal, addictive and unhealthy substances and behaviors, Lemanski said.

"There's constantly things coming at us, that we have to make decisions on." Lemanski said. "And through what you're learning here at Doering, you can build off of that. Because there are a lot of people that aren't doing the right things and they'll offer you things that you have to make a decision on."

The superintendent congratulated the kids and expressed that though it can be hard to say no and continually say no, it's important to get into the habit and perfect it so students don't give into peer pressure.



Police Officer John Field announces the DARE essay winners at Doering School last Friday, from left, Talia Oliveira, Bella Shunaman and Iraj Ahmed.
PHOTOS BY SHELBY MACRI



Posing for a picture after last week's DARE graduation are, from left, School Superintendent Steven Lemanski, student Bella Shunaman, Officer Jeff Hichborn, Principal Susan Federico, student Talia Oliveira, Police Chief Eric Gillis, Officer John Field, student Iraj Ahmed, Officer Taylor Hartman and Sgt. Steven Grasso.

Gillis spoke about his two children being graduates of the DARE program, and told the other parents in attendance that he saw it make a positive influence on his children.

"I know that they benefited an extreme amount from Officer Field and his teachings, and I know that your children will as well." Gillis said. "To the graduates, let me extend my warm congratulations on behalf of all the men and women at the Agawam Police Department."

The essay winners spoke about the harmful effects of cigarette smoking, vaping, and smoking marijuana. They explained the harmful effects that cigarettes have on people's physical health, including respiratory issues, heart and lung diseases, yellowing teeth, and types of cancers. The students also spoke about peer pressure and the importance of not only recognizing peer pressure, but also standing up confidently and saying 'no' when someone tries to pressure you to make a decision. The students each spoke about vaping, and how the new method of vaping is still dangerous and harmful to those who consume it. They said vaping companies advertise to younger kids by making appealing flavors, colors and discreet packaging, and warned their classmates not to fall for the advertising, because the health benefits are just as bad as smoking. The three students also spoke about the effect that alcohol can have on your reaction time, and how it can slow down your entire body physically and mentally. This makes it hard for those trying to drive, and they can make mistakes. Each student vowed to not touch tobacco, marijuana, or alcohol.

After each winner read her essay, the graduates were called up to receive their DARE diploma, a T-shirt, and to shake the hands of the police officers, Principal Susan Federico, and Lemanski.



From left, school and police officials shake the hands of DARE graduates as they receive their diplomas at the Jan. 31 ceremony.



Mayor William Sapelli speaks during Doering School's DARE graduation on Jan. 31.

Preschool open house next week at ECC

Agawam residents looking for a comprehensive, reasonably priced preschool experience for their 3- or 4-year-old child should attend the open house next week at the Early Childhood Center.

The ECC, part of Agawam's School Department, is accepting applications for both morning and afternoon sessions for the 2020-21 school year. The ECC provides all students with a standards-based education that builds the foundation for all future learning in Agawam public schools. It meets the needs of children with and without disabilities, and follows a developmentally appropriate curriculum where all children learn through play and hands-on activities. Half-day ECC sessions are offered at both the Agawam Early Childhood Center, 108 Perry Lane, and at Granger School in Feeding Hills Center.

The ECC will host an open house 6-7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Perry Lane facility. Applications are available at the center or may be downloaded at agawamed.org (select "Our School," "Early Childhood Center" and "Parents"). For more information, call 413-821-0597.

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Turley Publications is seeking an energetic person to fill the position of staff writer for two of its weekly publications: the *Ware River News*, which covers Ware, Hardwick and Warren, and the *Quaboag Current*, which covers the Brookfields, Sturbridge and New Braintree.This full-time position is based in our Ware office at 80 Main St. The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills or the enthusiasm to develop them.

The staff writer will cover municipal meetings, features and general news; essentially everything that unfolds in small towns. Assignments will be for both newspapers as well as other companywide publications.

Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Own camera and photography experience preferred
- Enthusiasm for community journalism
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced environment

Please email resume and three writing samples directly to Eileen Kennedy Managing Editor at ekennedy@turley.com.

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Opinion

OUR VIEW

Heart health a cause that deserves pumping up

The American Heart Association is uniting with companies, community organizations, families and friends to "Go Red" and "Glow Red" on Feb. 7 to spread the message that heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among women each year — more than all cancers combined.

Thousands are expected to participate in National Wear Red Day this Friday. Some organizations will offer heart healthy lunch and learn programs, organize healthy walks or offer healthier foods in vending machines or cafeterias. Additionally, landmarks and buildings around the state will illuminate in red to help raise awareness to women's heart health.

By Going Red and Glowing Red, we remind women (and men, too) how important our hearts are. February is the perfect time to learn more about your heart health and make positive, healthy changes.

Cardiovascular diseases kill about one woman every 80 seconds, but the good news is about 80 percent of cardiovascular diseases may be prevented. Let National Wear Red Day be a reminder to take care of your heart and learn your family history. It's important to understand risk factors that you can control, such as blood pressure, smoking, cholesterol and lack of regular physical activity, and some you can't control like age, gender and family history. Schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider to discuss all risk factors, including the five numbers that can change your life — total cholesterol, HDL (good) cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar and body mass index (BMI).

Go Red inspires women to make lifestyle changes, mobilize communities and shape policies to save lives. When you get involved, be it by advocating, fundraising or sharing your story, more lives are saved. According to the American Heart Association, about 293 fewer women in the U.S. die from heart disease and stroke each day thanks to community outreach and education efforts. United, we are working to improve the health of all women.

What do you think? Send your letter to the editor to aan@turley.com.

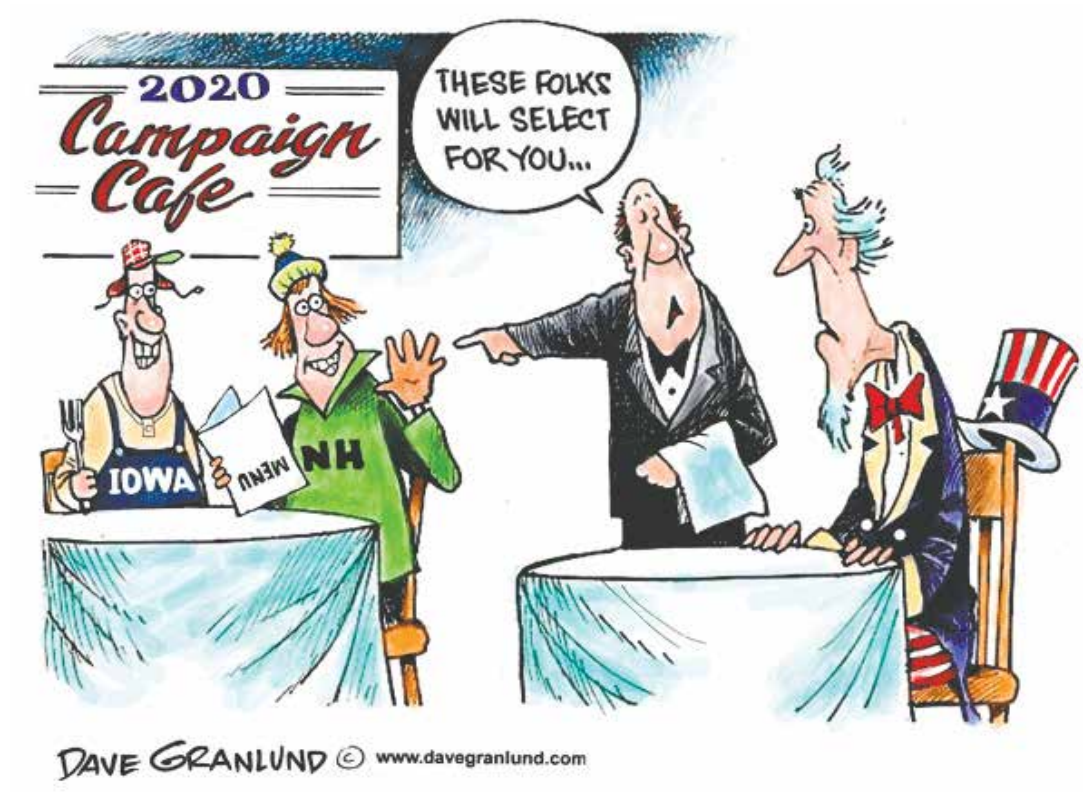
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Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage polices, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

For more information on business coverage for the Agawam Advertiser News, please email mballway@turley.com.

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Letters to the Editor

Davis made an impact on music in Agawam

It is with sadness and a grateful heart that I reflect on the news of the passing of Darcy Davis last week. Darcy was band director at AHS from 1955 through 1990 and also served as supervisor of music prior to his retirement. Darcy was actively engaged in drum corps and was in the bugler hall of fame. He was a giant in music education in New England and was honored by the Massachusetts Music Educators Association with the Distinguished Service and Lowell Mason awards in 1991 and 1986, respectively. Since his retirement, he had led a chorus at the Agawam Senior Center and taken great pride in establishing a "music museum" there that is full of memorabilia from high school and town musical events. He regularly wrote a column for the Agawam Advertiser News titled "Notes from the Music Room," with stories and anecdotes about various musical endeavors in the community.

Darcy is perhaps best remembered for his leadership of the marching band in Agawam. Agawam's marching band was selected to represent the commonwealth of Massachusetts at a competition in honor of "The Music Man" premiere in 1962 in Mason City, Iowa. He made the marching band an integral part of the community in Agawam and he is largely responsible for its continued success. In addition to his marching band prowess, he put together decades of high-quality musicals at the high school. These musicals were full school and community productions that were wildly successful.

Darcy kept beautiful scrapbooks of his bands and musicals; mementos that are still housed in the high school band room and serve as links to our storied past. These treasures are a true testament to someone who cared more about what he was giving to his students and the school than he cared about himself. Darcy would often stop by marching band rehearsals when I first began teaching in Agawam to check out how things were coming along. For many years, he was a frequent audience member at concerts, parades, football games and events, always with a smile and endless support and admiration for what the students were doing. I last saw Darcy at Agawam Day at the Big E in 2018. He was in a wheelchair and aided by his son, but nothing would stop him from getting to see his marching band.

I cherish the time I got to spend learning from him and we all owe a great deal of gratitude to an individual who gave his best for music education in Agawam and all of Western Massachusetts.

Bill Hueglin
Band Director,
Agawam High School

Mill St. affordable housing development fills a need

Affordable housing and Agawam's housing needs are not well understood in the community.

Underlying the issue of affordable housing is the growing housing crisis nationally and locally. Housing supply has not kept up with demand, nor have incomes kept up with rising housing costs, causing a severe housing shortage which is now impacting middle- and even upper-middle-income families. There is growing recognition of the problem and its economic impact on the commonwealth, including by the governor and state Legislature, and several housing bills are being considered for the commonwealth in this legislative session.

There are misconceptions about affordable housing, which actually is for people who are our neighbors and friends. The criteria for eligibility for subsidized affordable housing is having an income at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income, which for 2019 was $70,950 for a family of four for our area. The Agawam Housing Needs Assessment of May 4, 2016, documented the great need for subsidized affordable housing for people already living in Agawam who would be eligible if Agawam had available subsidized affordable housing.

The study showed that about 40 percent of the households in town were at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income. Just under 30 percent of households were estimated to be cost-burdened, meaning they pay more than 30 percent of their gross income for housing costs, so will not have enough money for all of life's necessities such as food, medicine, and clothing. In that group, about 800 households were extremely cost-burdened, meaning they pay more than 50 percent of their gross income for housing, putting them at risk of homelessness. The bottom line is that young people who have grown up in Agawam cannot afford to live here, and older residents do not have viable options if they want to downsize or can no longer afford the costs of their homes.

Rosewood Way is a cluster of 62 high-quality, energy-efficient townhouse-style apartments to be built by Way Finders at 586 Mill St. It is a mixed-income development, with 15 market rate units and 47 affordable units, most to be rented to households earning 60 percent of the Area Median Income, or $53,220 for a family of four. The project includes 20 one-bedroom, 29 two-bedroom, and 13 three-bedroom units. Fifty-two of the units are visitable, which means they can be lived in or visited by people who have trouble with steps or who use walkers or wheelchairs, and four will be fully accessible.

Way Finders has asked the state Department of Housing and Community Development to approve a 70 percent local preference for Rosewood Way. Local preference is for people currently living in the community, working in in the community, including town employees, or having children attending school in the community.

Way Finders applied to the Agawam Community Preservation Act Committee for $564,000, which the CPA granted as an approved use of CPA funds. This application now goes to the City

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Advertising Sales
John Baskin
jbaskin@turley.com

Managing Editor
Michael J. Ballway
mballway@turley.com

Office Manager
Teri Machia
aan@turley.com

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PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President

EDITOR
Michael J. Ballway
mballway@turley.com

STAFF WRITER
Peter Spotts
peterspotts@gmail.com

ADVERTISING SALES
John Baskin
jbaskin@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

SOCIAL MEDIA
@AgawamAdvertiserNews

WEB
www.agawamadvertisernews.
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Opinion

YESTERDAY'S HOMETOWN NEWS

The Big Five-0

Here's a fun fact for you: traditional wedding anniversaries each have a special color assigned to them!

The first year is the still-young "yellow" anniversary, followed by the second "red" anniversary and then the third "jade green" anniversary. If you've been married for 21 years, and have an affinity for in-your-face fruity colors, your anniversary cake might be decorated with bright orange frosting. Your 35th anniversary party might sport coral-colored balloons, and your 45th might feature streamers of "sapphire red" ... which, judging by the Google Image results, appears to just be very slightly pink-ish red. In celebrating the 50th anniversary, the traditional assignment is, of course, the color of glittering gold. Half a century together is no small feat — the waves of passing time sometimes do wear a once rock-solid bond down to sand that disperses away into the sea, so for something — a marriage, a business, a ceremony — to stand the tests of time is a true monument to its strength.

Here in Agawam, though, we have our own traditions, and the colors of the Class of 1970's "golden anniversary" will be orange and brown, as they always have been and always will be. As of writing this, there isn't currently a "50th Reunion" planned that I could find any details about, but I was specifically requested to write this article commemorating the class by one Annie Christopher. Annie is a dear family friend, having worked with my cousins at Valenti's for 40 years. We'll come back to Annie later. ...

For me, currently only two years out of Agawam High School, it's hard to imagine how different the world will look for me in another 50 years. I'm absolutely certain that no student graduating in 1970 could have predicted the world today: the artificial intelligence technology, the sprawling urban landscapes, the politics, the omnipresence of pop culture, so on and so forth. In 1970, IBM, the once corporate giant of the computer world, had just replaced the magnetic core technology of their computers with "virtual memory" and memory chips. The Baystate West area of Springfield, now called Tower Square, was still young in its development and offered promise for the people of the city. The Vietnam War was expanding into Cambodia, and a student protest at Kent State University had turned deadly with nine students injured and four students killed by police gunfire. The Beatles, who had a profound impact on the youth culture of the 1960s, announced that they were breaking up. The average American's income was $9,400 a year, and the average cost of a new home was $23,450, which is the approximate cost for two semesters at Westfield State University in 2020. You could fill your tank up for 36 cents per gallon. College students were paying for about $28.88 for a new typewriter, while today the latest Macbook Pro — equipped with a keyboard that includes a swipe-touch screen, 1 terabyte of storage space, and a six-speaker surround sound system — costs $2,799.



Sadie Parrotta

Not everything in life undergoes such drastic changes, however. I wasn't inspired to write this column simply to dwell on uncertain futures. Today's column is a story about how, every now and then, things circle right back to where they started.

One September night, when she was 16 years old, Annie Christopher had gone down to Riverside Park with her cousin to enjoy the Saturday night races as she did every week. Her cousin, who lived up in Hungry Hill, was close friends with two boys from the same neighborhood who happened to also have a weekly ritual of visiting the races. One of those boys was Dave Scagliarini, a football player from Cathedral High School. Annie and Dave were introduced, got to talking while the other pair of teens caught up with each other. They spent the rest of the evening together and before they knew it the night had whizzed by them faster than the cars on the speedway. Annie and Dave said goodbye for that night, but soon enough next Saturday came and they were reunited again. Rinse and repeat for a few months, and Dave finally asked Annie out on a date, and before long they were officially steady. Neither one of them had a car at the time, so Dave would hike all the way from Hungry Hill to Agawam to spend time with his girlfriend Annie. On the odd occasion that Dave would be allowed to borrow a car from his family, the pair would grab a bite at the McDonald's in West Springfield, or catch a film at the Memorial Drive-In on Memorial Avenue in West Springfield. When they weren't together, Annie loved to sport Dave's Panther letterman around the Agawam High School, stirring up a little drama just for the fun of it. Their most memorable date back then was when they saw the short-lived sixties rock group Gary Puckett & the Union Gap "live and in person." The pair dated for around a year or so before parting amicably and going on with their separate lives.

This story of two high school lovebirds isn't especially unique on its own — many of us have lived this same tale of short and sweet teenage romance! What makes this story interesting is what happened last autumn, when Dave Scagliarini decided on a whim to reach out to Annie again. Though 49 years had passed since the last time they saw each other, they'd touched base a few times in the decades that followed. Their paths never naturally crossed, though, and Dave decided it was time to take fate into his own hands. He wasn't sure if Annie still lived in Agawam and couldn't find her anywhere on social media, but did find a local address that he thought could be hers. He wrote a simple note to her and nervously held onto the finished draft for two weeks before stamping it and sending it off in the mail.

A few days later, Annie Christopher walked out to her mailbox to find a hand-written letter addressed to her that read: "If this is Ann Marie Christopher of Christopher Farms, this is Dave Scagliarini, your old friend. If you would like to have coffee, I would be pleased to meet with you — just call me. If this is not Annie, I'm sorry. Have a nice day!"

Right away, Annie picked up the phone and dialed Dave's phone number. The very next day, Annie was strolling down to the Dunkin' Donuts on North Westfield Street where she and Dave reunited for the first time in almost 50 years.

Instantly, they recognized each other's friendly, familiar faces in the crowded coffee shop.

For hours they played catch-up, telling each other all about the trials and tribulations of their adult lives. The world was different, and they'd grown tremendously as people, but they weren't aliens to each other — all these years later, they still had plenty of common ground, including a mutual (and controversial) love for the Yankees baseball team. In talking, they even found out that their daughters had both graduated from Agawam High School at the same time and even knew each other, but neither parent had ever made the connection. This time, before they parted ways, they made arrangements to visit the Stamford races together. It'd be a few months again before they'd start to call these meetings "dates" again, but these days they're seeing each other multiple times a week. Dave has a car now, though, so it's much easier for him to make the journey down from Hungry Hill to see her. Annie, whose excellent cooking I can personally vouch for, loves to cook dinner for the two of them to enjoy on a night in while watching baseball on the TV. No longer eager teenagers, they're not so caught up in specifically labeling their relationship, but they were happy to share their beautiful friendship with me for this column.

Time is the ultimate test for a relationship — romantic, platonic, familial or otherwise. Love and friendship that's meant to last, will. It's easy to get swept up and overwhelmed by this rapidly changing world, but no matter how bad inflation gets, or how expensive computers become, a caring, meaningful relationship will always remain priceless.

Sadie Parrotta is 2018 graduate of Agawam High School and lifelong resident of town.

Our Back Pages

From yesteryear's editions of the Agawam Advertiser News, compiled by Michael Ballway.

A year ago: Debilitating Medical Condition Treatment Centers Inc., the proposed medical marijuana dispensary at the Agawam Rotary, has its state license but is waiting to assess the demand for a dispensary as recreational marijuana businesses open in nearby towns, reported the Feb. 14, 2019, Agawam Advertiser News. DMCTC's chief operating officer said the dispensary is ready to begin building within four months of a decision being reached. A year later, the dispensary has not yet opened.

Five years ago: The parish council at St. John the Evangelist Church was unhappy with the Catholic Diocese of Springfield's decision to assign a new pastor to the Agawam congregation, reported the Feb. 12, 2015, Agawam Advertiser News. The Rev. Brian McGrath, an experienced pastor at a Westfield church, was set to replace the Rev. Tomasz Parzynski, who had been serving as the interim pastor at St. John for a year and a half.

Ten years ago: Forrest Bradford and City Councilor Jill Messick hosted a global warming "think tank" at the Agawam Public Library on Feb. 13, 2010. The three-hour information session addressed facts and scientific theories about global warming; how to combat "deniers paranoia" and confusion; and how activists can "make positive change and make it now."

LETTER | from page 6

Council for final approval.

When considering this request, it is important to recognize that affordable housing development is extremely complicated, with many state and federal regulations and requirements. The biggest challenge is that there simply are not enough federal or state funds to meet the demand. Way Finders is a highly respected nonprofit developer of affordable housing throughout the region, and has worked closely and collaboratively with the town. They would not be asking for money from the CPA if it was not needed to build and maintain the high quality development they, and we, want for Agawam. Further, when the state Department of Housing and Community Development reviews the many affordable housing development applications for every round of funding, local support is a critical consideration in the approval process, which Agawam can demonstrate by granting CPA funding.

Agawam needs the Rosewood Way development. Creating affordable housing opens up more housing options for others. The 20 one-bedroom apartments in the development will organically serve seniors and single people or couples, a huge need in our town. And the 62 units have increased our count on the state Subsidized Housing Inventory. Since a portion of the town's CPA money can only be spent on affordable housing, the Rosewood Way development is an excellent use of those funds to benefit the town of Agawam.

Join me in urging the Agawam City Council to approve CPA funds for Way Finders for the Rosewood Way development.

Corinne Wingard
Agawam

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Schools & Youth

Free family events scheduled

The Agawam Family and Community Program has announced the following events this month. For all event registrations and questions, email Erin Cosgrove at ecosgrove@agawamed.org or call 413-821-0597.

Learn, Play and Grow: 6-7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, and 9:30-10:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7, in the lower level at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam. Children and their caregivers are invited to get out of the house and complete Valentine-themed crafts and activities. Advance registration is required.

Watch Me Grow: 9:30-10:30 a.m. every Tuesday, in the lower level at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam. This weekly drop-in program for children from birth to age 5 (with parent or caretaker) helps them meet and celebrate their developmental milestones as described in the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Topics follow a five-week rotation, with activities focusing on the ASQ standards of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving and personal social skills.

Shake, Shimmy and Dance: 9:30-10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12, in the lower level at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam. Parents and caretakers will participate with their children (ages 12 months to 5 years) in exploring rhythm, beats, songs and movement. Advance registration is required.

Weekly Playgroup: 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Thursday, in the lower level at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam. Open to families with children birth to 5 years old, the drop-in playgroup has two age-appropriate rooms for children and a parent or caregiver to learn, explore and build friendships.

Coffee and Conversation: 9:30-10:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 28, in the lower level at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St., Agawam. All parents, grandparents and caregivers can bring a topic to discuss, share their parenting experiences or simply enjoy adult conversation. Coffee and tea will be served. Free childcare is provided.

Programs are not held if school is closed that day. If Agawam schools announce a two-hour delay, all morning programs are canceled.

School Lunch

All lunches served with fresh and chilled fruit. Instead of the main entrée, students can substitute a deluxe salad or the sandwich of the day.

AGAWAM HIGH SCHOOL

High schoolers can also substitute a pizza meal for their entrée.

Monday, Feb. 10: Fenway Frank on wholegrain bun, oven fries, Boston baked beans, pickle spear; or loaded nachos, lettuce, tomato, salsa, cheese, corn and black bean salad.

Tuesday, Feb. 11: Chicken and waffles with syrup, hash browns, assorted muffins, carrot sticks with dip; or grilled cheese and tomato soup, Goldfish crackers, tater tots, bean salad.

Wednesday, Feb. 12: Chicken fillet wrap with assorted sauce, lettuce, tomato, cheese, side of coleslaw.

Thursday, Feb. 13: Fresh assorted calzones, garden salad with light dressing; or pasta with meat sauce, bread stick, steamed broccoli, bean salad.

Friday, Feb. 14: French toast with syrup, sausage links, red roasted potatoes, orange juice; or chicken parm grinder, celery sticks with ranch, Cape Cod chips, bean salad.

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Monday, Feb. 10: Popcorn chicken bowl, mashed potato, corn niblets, dinner roll.

Tuesday, Feb. 11: Mozzarella sticks with marinara sauce, celery and cucumber with dip, garlic knot.

Wednesday, Feb. 12: Pasta with meatballs, garlic knot, steamed broccoli, Goldfish crackers.

Thursday, Feb. 13: Beef taco boat with shredded cheese, diced tomatoes, rice and beans.

Friday, Feb. 14: Ultra-grain stuffed crust cheese pizza, salad with light dressing, cookie.

ROBERTA DOERING SCHOOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Monday, Feb. 10: Popcorn chicken bowl, mashed potato, corn niblets, dinner roll.

Tuesday, Feb. 11: Hot dog on a roll, Boston baked beans, coleslaw.

Wednesday, Feb. 12: Pasta with meatballs, garlic knot, steamed broccoli, Goldfish crackers.

Thursday, Feb. 13: Beef taco boat with shredded cheese, shredded romaine lettuce, diced tomatoes, rice and beans.

Friday, Feb. 14: Ultra-grain stuffed crust cheese pizza, salad with light dressing, cookie.

BREAKFAST

The daily breakfast entrée menu was not available at press time. All breakfasts include assorted cold cereal, muffins and pastries, cheese sticks, fresh fruit and orange juice.

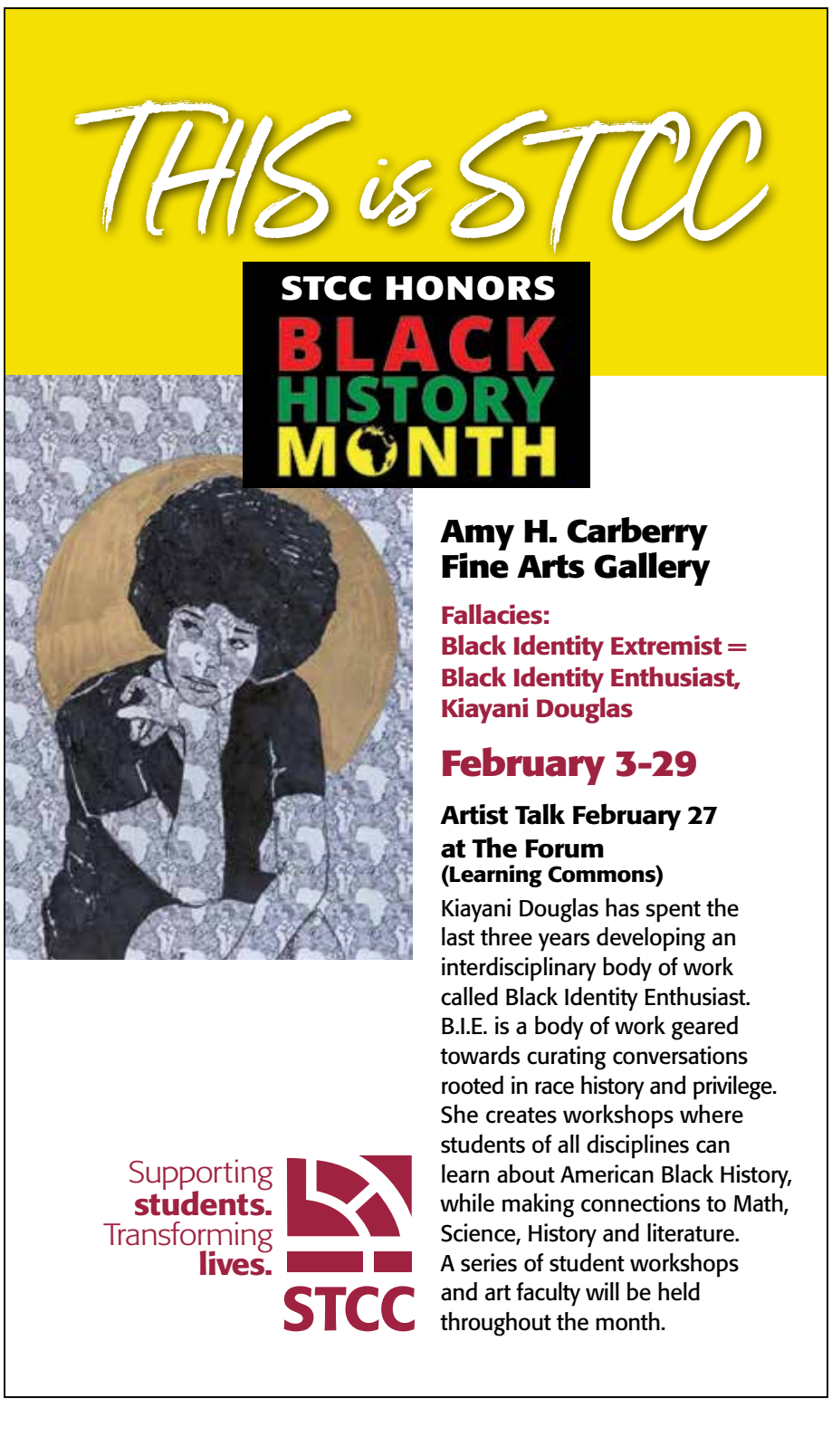
Serving times: High school, 7 a.m.; junior high, 7:15 a.m.; Granger, 7:55 a.m.; Doering, 8:10 a.m.; Phelps, 8:20 a.m.; Robinson Park, 8:30 a.m.; Clark, 8:35 a.m.

Winter Reading Program runs to Feb.

Reading logs are available for the Agawam Public Library's Winter Reading Program, which began Tuesday.

Children and teenagers are encouraged to sign up for the program, in which they track their reading through Feb. 22. When kids reach their goal, they earn a free book to keep.

Other programs include a drop-in scavenger hunt around the Children's Room and a special guessing game during school vacation week in February. For more information, visit the Children's Room in the library at 750 Cooper St., Agawam, or contact Children's Librarian Pam Weingart at 413-789-1550 or pweingart@agawamlibrary.org.



Little League signups taken this Sat.

Agawam Little League Baseball and Softball will hold its second round of in-person signups Saturday, Feb. 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., Agawam. A third and final session will be held at the same times on Feb. 29. Signups are also being taken at www.agawamllittleleague.com.

Baseball players aged 4 to 16, and softball players aged 6-14, are eligible to play. New players and softball players are strongly recommended to register in person and bring a copy of the child's birth certificate.

Player evaluations will be March 7 for baseball and March 10-11 for softball. Games begin in April.

Opening Day is Saturday, April 25. The Little League is looking for volunteers to help with this event. For more information or to volunteer, contact Justin Lentes at 413-478-5541 or justinlentes@gmail.com.

For more information about Agawam Little League, contact league President A.J. Christopher at 413-575-0055 or ajchristopher2@gmail.com.

Touring troupe brings 'Macbeth' to AHS

Agawam High School will once again be the venue for a performance by Shakespeare & Co. from Lenox.

On Wednesday morning, Feb. 12, this professional touring troupe will perform the Bard's famous tragedy of "Macbeth." This condensed, 90-minute performance is geared toward both students and adults. Several auditorium seats will be set aside for general admission, and all are welcome to attend, including homeschooled children and their parents. Admission is free, but tickets must be reserved in advance. For reservations, contact Tina Dunham at 413-783-0502, or tinamarie154@yahoo.com.

Doors open to the public at 8:45 a.m. at the high school, 760 Cooper St., Agawam. The curtain rises at 9:15 a.m. Limited public parking will be available.

The Agawam Cultural Council is sponsoring this free performance as part of its "Give Back to the Community" program. The council, an all-volunteer agency, is funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The council is charged with bringing engaging, entertaining, and educational events and opportunities in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to children and adults from Agawam and the surrounding communities.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDA

7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11
Agawam Junior High School
1305 Springfield St., Feeding Hills

1. Call to order
2. Moment of silence
3. Roll call of attendance
4. Regular meeting — 7 p.m.
5. Citizen's Speak Time
6. Highlights on Education:
a. Perfect MCAS Scores Presentation
7. Superintendent's Notes
8. Student Advisory Committee representative update
9. Unfinished business:
a. SCR-20-02, Acceptance of $5,000 Donation from the AHS Ice Hockey Booster Club
b. SCR-20-03, Approval of AHS 2020-2021 Program of Studies
10. Business meeting
a. Routine matters
1) Approval of minutes
2) Calendar/correspondence
b. Warrants/transfers
c. Reports:
1) Scheduled Reports:
• Summer School Update – D. Costanzi
2) Subcommittee updates
11. New business: None
12. Any other items that may legally come before the committee
13. Adjournment



SPORTS

MIAA

Western, Central Mass. stand to lose its sectional tournaments

Editor's note: This is the second of a four-part series to break down the statewide tournament proposal, what it is, it's effect on the Western Mass. region, the challenges, and how your athletic directors and coaches feel about it.

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

With the impending vote on a statewide tournament sponsored by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, one of the biggest things being talked about in our region are the long-term effects it will have.

Agawam High School Athletic Director David Stratton has repeatedly said during the past few months that "Western Mass. loves its tournament."

Under the MIAA proposal, that would be the biggest impact on the region. There would no longer be a "Western Mass. Champion."

The vote to pass the statewide tournament is likely to be successful, many athletic directors feel. This has led the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference, which is the governing body of high school sports locally, to consider holding its own tournament prior to whenever the state tournament is held.

Stratton said the PVIAC is working on a proposal to hold some type of tournament. He did not say how it would be structured and how the competition would be separated. However, in order to have time for the tournament, it could cut into the regular season for certain sports. For example, the soccer season, now 18 games, could be lowered to 16 games to make time for a tournament.

One of the many reasons besides the love for the regional tournament, is because of the risk of so many Western Mass. teams having to travel long distances for the state tournament.

The current proposal of a 32-team tournament by the MIAA states the higher seed would host games in the first three rounds with the semifinals and finals at neutral sites.

While it is the impression of skeptics that Eastern Mass. would host most of the games, some projections of how seedings would take shape were tried with the most recent soccer tournaments. According to those projects, teams like Belchertown boys soccer, Ludlow boys soccer, and Minnechaug girls soccer, would all have very high seeds and host a number of games in the tournament.

However, it is still unclear if

TOURNEY ❙ page 10

WRESTLING

Inexperience hurts Agawam in loss to West Side

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

For a second straight week, Agawam had the opportunity to host a home wrestling meet. But for the second straight week, inexperience proved to be the downfall for the Brownies in a 59-21 loss to visiting West Springfield last Wednesday night.

The Brownies are still deep at the heavier weights, which should bode well for the Brownies in the upcoming Western Massachusetts Division 1 Tournament at Central High School on Feb. 15.

But in dual meets, Agawam has struggled to score points.

The Brownies, which were celebrating their Senior Night, did start at the heavier weights, going with the 170-class first. It allowed Agawam to put some points on the board early before West Springfield's lighter weight wrestlers made the biggest impact of the night.

At the heavyweight position, Antonio Ramos, son of coach Armando Ramos, continued to show his dominance this season.

Ramos faced Bello Lopez. He scored an early tackle takedown early in the match. But Lopez was not ready to take a pin. Ramos, very speedy for a heavyweight, was able to grapple his way to turning Lopez over and scoring the pinfall with 1:13 remaining in the first period.

Tom Caracciolo scored a win at 170 pounds. He was the only Brownie to grab a decision victory as he opened up the meet with a six-minute marathon against Lurik Hairzi. He had a couple of takedowns and a nearfall, but could not turn over his opponent throughout the entire match. He wound up with a 7-3 decision victory.



Tom Caracciolo locks up at 170 pounds.
PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Nick Burbank had a win at 195 pounds, picking up the pinfall in the second period of his match against Griffin Crawley.

Evan Cruz suffered a setback at 120 pounds, losing a match to Tyler Parent before Ramos victory.

Ramos would have the final victory of the evening for Agawam.

Back at the top of the weight

WRESTLING ❙ page 10


Nick Burbank holds a hammer lock against his opponent.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Brownies find success in league matchups


Jermaine Norfleet focuses on his free throw.
PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Last Thursday night, Agawam scored its first Suburban League victory with a 59-50 triumph over visiting Chicopee Comprehensive. At 3-10 Agawam really needs a second place or better finish in the league to qualify for tournament. Agawam is currently 2-1 in the league. Agawam and Comp went to halftime tied 25-25, and were tied 34-34 at one point in the third quarter. Agawam would outscore the Colts 20-5 in the final frame, however, to score the win. Mike Berthaiume had 22 points to lead all scorers. He had four treys.



Matt Hotaling tries to deflect the rebound.



Evan Lyne shoots from beyond the arc.


Thomas Arcelaschi circles the perimeter.

Sports

The Week Ahead

Boys Basketball		
Thursday, Feb. 6	Home	Sabis 7 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 10	Away	West Springfield 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 12	Away	Holyoke 7 p.m.
Girls Basketball		
Friday, Feb. 7	Home	South Hadley 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 11	Away	Granby 7 p.m.
Ice Hockey		
Thursday, Feb. 6	Away	Ludlow 8:30 p.m.
Indoor Track		
Friday, Feb. 7	Away	PVIAC Meet 6 p.m.
Wrestling		
Saturday, Feb. 8	Home	Quad-Meet 10 a.m.

Thunderbirds grab win on back of rookie goalie

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Ice-O-Topes (Thunderbirds) improved to 26-20-2-0 thanks to a 28-save shutout performance from rookie goaltender Ryan Bednard in a 2-0 victory over the Hartford Wolf Pack (26-11-4-5) on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 on What If? Night at the MassMutual Center.

It took the Ice-O-Topes less than four minutes to get the sellout crowd to its feet. After a man advantage resulted in no chances for Springfield, Jonathan Ang took matters into his own hands, receiving a stretch pass on the left wing from Matt Mangene. The second-year pro quickly slammed on the brakes, forcing a Hartford defender to stumble. With extra ice room available, Ang rushed the front of the net before punching a forehand shot through Wolf Pack goalie Tom McCollum to open the scoring, 1-0, at 3:54.

The Wolf Pack would fire 11 shots in response in the opening period, but rookie netminder Ryan Bednard was on his game early, stopping each of the shots that came his way in the first frame. McCollum stopped eight out of nine Springfield shots on net.

The stalemate continued in the second, but not without a few chances for the Wolf Pack to tie it. Hartford could not take advantage on a second power play past the midpoint of the period, and moments later, after a broken stick slapper by Vincent LoVerde arrived on the doorstep, Matt Beleskey missed a seemingly open net with Bednard battling to get back in front of the shot.

Wanting to add some insurance in the third, Dryden Hunt deflected a shot over the shoulder of McCollum at the 4:00 mark of the final period to make it a 2-0 game. Mangene picked up his second assist of the night, as his shot got to the front of the net for Hunt's backhand tip.

From there, Bednard stole the show, including one phenomenal sliding save from post-to-post on Vinni Lettieri near the midpoint of the third. Springfield clamped down and ushered home their second shutout win of the season and the first in Bednard's AHL career. The rookie goalie is now 3-0-0 with Springfield, having stopped 98 of 101 shots.

The T-Birds embark on a five-game road trip, beginning with a Wednesday rematch in Hartford, the team's third straight match-up against the Wolf Pack on the schedule.

MIAA holds diversity summit

FRAMINGHAM – The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA) held its third annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Summit at Framingham State University on Monday, Jan. 13. With over 220 attendees representing 65 schools, the 2020 Summit featured eight concurrent workshops covering subjects including: impact of race on daily life, para-sports, inclusive strategies, Unified Champion schools, working to undo bias and end hate, creating safe and supportive schools, making authentic connections, and cultural competency and mental health disparities. Mike Rubin, MIAA Assistant Associate said, "Two goals that we established at the start of this inclusion mission were to promote diversity and encourage participation, interaction and understanding in our increasingly diverse society."

Summit presenters included members of the MIAA/MSAA DEI Committee, which consists of school administrators, supporting agencies, and representatives from higher education institutions, as well as individuals from the MIAA Partners in Prevention, a powerful collaborative of public and private prevention agencies initiatives. The Committee and the Collaborative provide extensive support, resources and expertise in the delivery of insight and programmatic initiatives leading to cultural competencies to the membership. At the completion of the workshops, attendees created school action plans, "To Know is to Understand -- Plan For Action" focusing on workshop take-aways such as, "become aware of our own privileges and understand the many '-isms' that exist," "accept yourself before accepting others," and "have the discussions that matter, even if they make you uncomfortable." Rubin, MIAA stated, "The recent DEI Summit was an exemplary blueprint for what the Committee is trying to accomplish."

The Summit provided two keynote speakers, Muji Karim, a Paralympic Track and Field Athlete, and Briana Mastel, a member of Boston Pride of the National Women's Hockey League. Mr. Karim's message to "see the silver lining" when dealing with obstacles and Ms. Mastel's encouragement to be a "strong link" and "to help others" are in alignment with the MIAA Wellness Pillar and inclusion message. In addition, Javier Cevallos, President of Framingham State University, and Yvonne Spicer, Mayor of Framingham, addressed the attendees with a warm welcome to the City of Framingham. Rubin stated, "The two keynote speakers and eight amazing presenters shared information, celebrated differences, and engaged attendees to think critically about the totality of Inclusion!"

Summit attendees included Student Leaders, Group Leaders, Coaches, Teachers, Team Captains, Counselors and Administrators.

TOURNEY from page 9

Western Mass. would get an opportunity to host state semifinal and final games. Hosting the state finals was attempted for basketball, and failed due to gate receipts.

Some of the questions still lingering state wide are the increased travel costs for smaller schools. No matter what part of the state a school is in, with tighter school budgets, having to pay bus drivers to transport teams on two to four hour trips could be problematic for schools with smaller budgets and less flexibility on spending. It could lead to larger athletic user fees for student-athletes.

The lingering effects could be seen as the years go on, but only time will tell if a statewide tournament has long-term negative effects on Western Massachusetts.



SEND US YOUR SPORTS PHOTOS

Have you taken photos at a local sports event and want to see them published in this paper? Email your image(s) with description to:
sports@turley.com

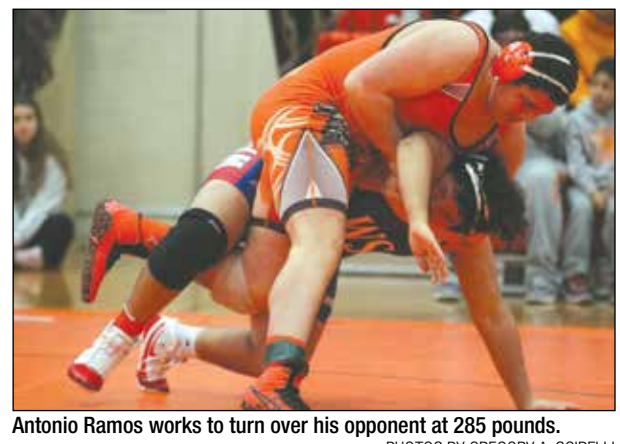
WRESTLING from page 9

classes, West Springfield would win every match from 106 to 160 to take the meet.

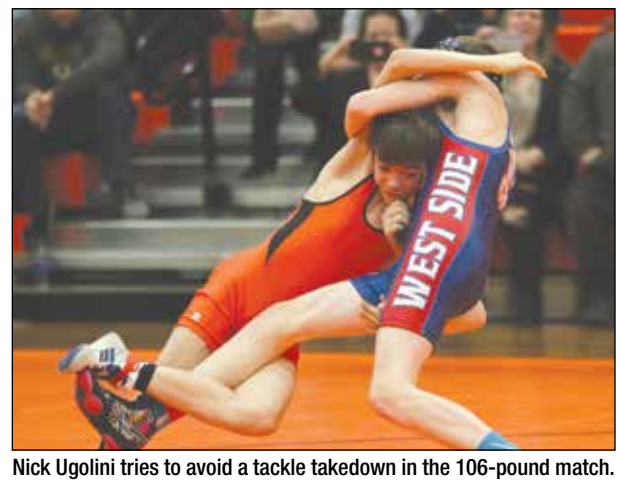
With the loss, Agawam faced Putnam Vocational earlier this week, then was scheduled to host a quad meet this weekend against several teams from Eastern Massachusetts.

The following week, Agawam will fight at Western Mass. with Ramos, Cruz, and Caracciolo among the top contenders to win titles. For the lighter weights, it will be an opportunity to gain some great experience.

The dual meet against West Springfield was one of the very few meets where 14 matches were held.



Antonio Ramos works to turn over his opponent at 285 pounds.
PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Nick Ugolini tries to avoid a tackle takedown in the 106-pound match.

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Contestants and selections

Fifteen Agawam High School students competed in round 1 of the school-wide Poetry Out Loud contest. They are listed along with the names and authors of the poems they recited.

Alison Burbank: "The Man with the Night Sweats" by Thom Gunn
Sean Colfer: "I am Trying to Break Your Heart" by Kevin Young
Serena Croteau: "The Obligation to Be Happy" by Linda Pastan
Alyssa Drumm: "'Hope' is the Thing with Feathers — (314)" by Emily Dickinson
MacKenzie Forfa: "The Bookshelf of the God of Infinite Space" by Jeffrey Skinner
Julia Hall: "Self Portrait as So Much Potential" by Chen Chen
Diana Javadian: "Flirtation" by Rita Dove
Leila Lendon: "Weighing In" by Rhina P. Espaillat
Emily Miolla: "Genetics" by Jacqueline Woodson
Selma Rahman: "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley
Antonio Ramos: "In the Desert" by Stephen Crane
Sarah Ross: "Always Something More Beautiful" by Stephen Dunn
Skylar Thies: "Cartoon Physics, Part 1" by Nick Flynn
Mason Wesley: "I Eat Breakfast to Begin the Day" by Zubair Ahmed
Amanda Woodford: "Recess" by Maria Hummel



Above: Junior Sarah Ross not only made it to round 2 of the Poetry Out Loud contest, but after she recited "The Children's Hour" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow she won first place in the competition.

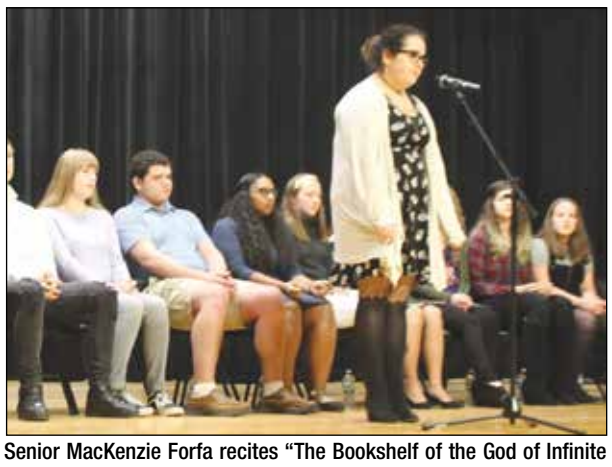
Right: Rachel Patterson, an AHS English teacher and coordinator of the Poetry Out Loud contest, talks with school counselors Richard Veres and Susan Niles, far left, who, along with Assistant Principal Susan Feyre, far right, were among this year's poetry judges.



PHOTOS BY MIKE LYDICK



Contest winner Sarah Ross, center right, and runner-up Julia Hall, center left, are flanked on stage by fellow Poetry Out Loud contestants.



Senior MacKenzie Forfa recites "The Bookshelf of the God of Infinite Space" by Jeffrey Skinner at the high school's sixth annual Poetry Out Loud contest.



Sean Colfer was the only freshman to compete in round 2. He recited "The American Soldier" by Philip Freneau.



Antonio Ramos gave a passionate delivery of Stephen Crane's "In the Desert" in round 1.



Junior Alyssa Drumm earned a place in the second round of the Poetry Out Loud contest. The junior recited "God's Secretary" by R.S. Gwynn in that round.



"I Eat Breakfast to Begin the Day" was the poem senior Mason Wesley chose to recite in the first round of the poetry contest. It was written by Zubair Ahmed.

POETRY from page 1

to10 finalists for round 2. Finalists recited different poems than they had in round 1. The second round determined the winner who will go on to represent AHS at the regional level.

This year's winner is junior Sarah Ross, who recited "The Children's Hour" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Julia Hall, also a junior, was chosen as the school's runner-up after she recited "Cathedral of Salt" by Nick Flynn. Hall will represent AHS in the regional competition if Ross is unable to attend.

The other eight finalists were Sean Colfer, freshman ("The American Soldier" by Philip Freneau); Serena Croteau, junior ("Friendship After Love" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox); Alyssa Drumm, sophomore ("God's Secretary" by R.S. Gwynn); Leila Lendon, sophomore ("Invictus" by William Ernest Henley); Emily Miolla, sophomore ("Dirge in the Woods" by George Meredith); Selma Rahman, sophomore ("Fairy-Tale Logic" by A.E. Stallings); Antonio Ramos, junior ("Cabezon" by Amy Beeder); Mason Wesley, senior ("Fever" by Hailey Leithauser).

Ross will compete at the regional level in a competition that will be held in early March in Springfield. The following week, winners of the contest advance to the state competition in Boston for a chance to compete in the national finals in late April in Washington, D.C. The more than 50,000 Massachusetts students who compete in Poetry Out Loud contests each year are among the more than 3 million students who participate from schools in every state.

The competition, presented in partnership with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Poetry Foundation, encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition.

Each winner at the state level receives $200 and an all-expenses-paid trip, with an adult chaperone, to Washington, D.C., to compete for the national championship. The state winner's school receives $500 for the purchase of poetry books. The first runner-up in each state receives $100, with $200 for his or her school. A total of $50,000 in awards and school stipends is awarded annually at the national finals.

English teacher Rachel Patterson coordinates the school's Poetry Out Loud competition. Vice Principal Susan Feyre and guidance counselors Susan Niles and Richard Veres served as poetry judges. English teachers Sable Johnson and Kelly Hawkins served as accuracy judges.

The Children's Hour

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
Read by Sarah Ross (winner)

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

Cathedral of Salt

By Nick Flynn
Read by Julia Hall (runner-up)

Beneath all this I'm carving a cathedral
of salt. I keep

the entrance hidden, no one seems to notice
the hours I'm missing… I'll
bring you one night, it's where
I go when I hang up the phone…

Neither you
nor your soul is waiting for me at

the end of this, I know that, the salt
nearly clear after I

chisel out the pews, the see-through
altar, the opaque

panes of glass that depict the stations of
our cross — Here is the day

we met, here is the day we remember we
met… The air down here

will kill us, some say, some wear paper
masks, some still imagine the air above the green

trees, thick with bees

building solitary nests out of petals. What's
the name for this? Ineffable? The endless

white will blind you, some say,
but what is there to see we haven't already

seen? Some say it's
like poking a stick into a river — you might as well

simply write about the stick.

Or the river.

Out & About

Out & About is a community calendar for Agawam and neighboring towns. Free listings are available for non-commercial, non-political entertainment or educational events that are free to attend, or fundraisers that benefit a non-profit organization. Only events in Agawam or one of its immediate bordering towns, or events that benefit an organization based in Agawam, will be listed. Submitted items should be brief, with only time, date, location, activity explanation, and contact information, and may be edited for length and style. Items may be sent to aan@turley.com, faxed to 413-283-7107 or mailed to Agawam Advertiser News, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069. The deadline for calendar listings is noon Friday, the week before that Thursday's newspaper.

Friday, Feb. 7

ROMANTIC MUSIC CONCERT as part of the Agawam Cultural Council's free Applause Series. Doors open at the Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, at 6:15 p.m.; the concert begins at 7. Judy Handler and Mark Levesque will feature Spanish and Latin American music for guitar, mandolin and cuatro. More info: 413-821-0604 or www.agawamcc.org.

Sunday, Feb. 9

BUILDING TOURS of the former Classical High School, 235 State St., Springfield, 2 p.m. Free. Participants will see how the former high school was converted into condominiums 30 years ago. Hosted by Historical Classical Inc.

Saturday, Feb. 15

SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHEON at the Grange hall, 47 N. West St., Feeding Hills, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Homemade soups, sandwiches, dessert and choice of beverage will be sold for $7 for adults, $3.50 for children under 12. Proceeds benefit Community Grange 382. Reservations are suggested at 413-789-2061.

Agawam Senior Center

Lunch Menu

Monday, Feb. 10: Pork chop with gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, apple sauce, banana.
Tuesday, Feb. 11: Birthday celebration — chili con carne over baked potato, cheddar cheese, Caesar salad, birthday cake.
Wednesday, Feb. 12: Cream of broccoli soup, turkey salad sandwich, fruit juice, fruited Jell-O.
Thursday, Feb. 13: Chicken breast supreme, au gratin potatoes, peas, mixed fruit.
Friday, Feb. 14: Valentine's Day dinner — homemade lasagna, lovely side salad and warm roll, broccoli salad, pudding.

Daily Events

Monday, Feb. 10: Yoga ($6), 8:15 a.m.; line dancing ($3), 9:45 a.m.; vision seminar, 10 a.m.; chair yoga ($6), 11:30 a.m.; bridge group, 12:30 p.m.; bingo, 1 p.m.; social dance, 2 p.m.; Zumba Gold ($6), 5:30 p.m.; line dancing, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 11: Weight training, 8:30 a.m.; knitting, 9 a.m.; Ask the Techs — computer help, 10 a.m.; Zumba Gold ($6), 10:15 a.m.; ladies billiards, noon; Senior Cinemas ("My Big Fat Greek Wedding"), 12:30 p.m.; mah jongg, 12:30 p.m.; dominoes, 12:30 p.m.; canasta, 1 p.m.; writing group, 1:30 p.m.; beginner line dancing, 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 12: Yoga ($6), 8:15 a.m.; gentle yoga ($6), 9:45 a.m.; bereavement group, 10 a.m.; Heart Healthy seminar, 10 a.m.; bridge, 12:30 p.m.; ballroom lesson (see staff), 1 p.m.; Golden Agers Chapter 1 meeting, 1:30 p.m.; card making, 4 p.m.; Zumba Gold ($6), 5:30 p.m.; line dancing, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 13: Weight training, 8:30 a.m.; Quilting Club, 9 a.m.; new member group, 9:30 a.m.; Wii Sports, 10:15 a.m.; reiki ($10), 10:30 a.m.; bridge, 12:15 p.m.; dominoes, 12:30 p.m.; open art, 1 p.m.; blood pressure check, 1 p.m.; yoga ($6), 4 p.m.; line dancing, 5:30 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 14: Yin Yoga ($6), 8:15 a.m.; Let's Paint ($10), 9:15 a.m.; tai chi ($6), 10 a.m.; Valentine's Day luncheon, 11:30 a.m.; canasta, 1 p.m.; cornhole, 1 p.m.; cribbage, 1 p.m.; card games, 1 p.m.; essential oil class, 5:30 p.m.; line dancing, 6 p.m.

ONGOING

NAMI CONNECTION, a free, peer-led support group for adults who are concerned about their mental health, meets Thursdays, 2-4 p.m., in the NAMI Western Massachusetts office at 324A Springfield St., Agawam. For more information, call 413-786-9139 or email information@namiwm.org.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS can help with eating problems. Meetings are held throughout Western Massachusetts, including regular meetings in Agawam. There are no dues, fees, weigh-ins or special foods to buy. All are welcome. For more information, call Springfield Answering Services at 413-783-4198 or Marcia at 703-415-6744, or visit www.oawmass.org.

THE TRADING POST consignment shop is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays at First Baptist Church, 760 Main St., Agawam. The Trading Post carries a variety of items, including clothes, shoes. handbags, jewelry, books, toys, household and gift items. Donations are welcomed during store hours.

THE AGAWAM ST. PATRICK COMMITTEE meets the second Wednesday of each month, September through June, at 6:30 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. For information on how to join, call Vera Conway at 413-786-3247 or email Rosemary Sandlin at rosemarysandlin@gmail.com.

AGAWAM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 459 Mill St., Agawam, offers a free "Crochet Club" the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. All are invited to join, including men and women and beginners to experienced crocheters. Drop-ins welcome. Hooks and yarn available if needed. For more information, call 413-786-7991.

POLICE LOG

The Agawam Police Department responded to 322 calls for service Jan. 27 through Feb. 2, and recorded the following arrests. No arrests in the public log have been omitted. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

Fernando Rivera-Rios, 29, of 69 Ames St., Springfield, was arrested at 1:59 a.m. on Bondi's Island on five warrants.
Derek Raymond Costa, 38, of 185 Windsor St., West Springfield, was arrested at 7:59 p.m. on South End Bridge Circle and charged with possession of a class A drug.

Wednesday, Jan. 29

Joseph J. Sparveri III, 35, of 873 Springfield St., Apt. 14, Feeding Hills, was arrested at 5:42 p.m. on Mill Street and charged with driving with a suspended license and possession of a class A drug, subsequent offense.

Friday, Jan. 31

Ryan Hickey, 33, of 29 Summer St., Enfield, Conn., was arrested at 2:52 a.m. on Main Street and charged with driving under the influence of liquor, negligent driving, and possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle.

Saturday, Feb. 1

William P. Gorry, 30, of 6 Seymour Road, Windsor Locks, Conn., was arrested at 1:06 a.m. on North Street on a warrant, and also charged with leaving the scene of property damage, illegally attaching plates to a motor vehicle, driving without a registration and driving with a suspended license, subsequent offense

PIPELINE from page 1

sented a petition signed by 134 town residents.

The hearing will address a council resolution to accept $150,000 from Tennessee Gas Company LLC in exchange for granting an easement across three properties owned by the town. Tennessee Gas officials and Agawam's own town solicitor had told the council, at the Jan. 28 workshop meeting, that there's nothing the town can do to stop the project, which was approved by a two-year permitting process with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. If Agawam chooses to reject the negotiated price, Tennessee Gas can take the easement by eminent domain.

Jim Hartman, a right-of-way agent for Tennessee Gas, told the council on Jan. 28 that he would prefer not to use eminent domain, as the legal process would take longer and potentially delay construction. Tennessee Gas hopes to build the new pipeline this summer.

In a letter to councilors dated Jan. 30, however, Grossberg raised several questions she would like to have answered before the town approves the easement:

• How does cancellation of a distribution pipe through West Springfield to Holyoke affect the need for additional pipeline capacity in Agawam?

• Will the $150,000 payment cover the cost of repairing roads or other infrastructure damaged by heavy construction equipment? How will traffic be affected?

• How was the easement price of $150,000 determined? Was there an independent appraisal of the value of the land?

• Where will Tennessee Gas draw the water for its hydrostatic testing of new pipes? Will it pay for this water?

• What is the cost of this project, and how will it affect the rates paid by natural gas customers?

• When will Tennessee Gas file its implementation plan? Grossberg suggested that the town not give permission for the easement until it can see the construction plan.

• What measures has Tennessee Gas put in place to avoid repeating the 2017 discharge of contaminated water at the Suffield Street compressor station?

• Is a proposed turbine upgrade at the compressor station truly more energy efficient? A Tennessee Gas spokesperson said so at the Jan. 28 meeting, but the company's environmental impact statement says otherwise, Grossberg contended.

"Why are we doing this?" Grossberg asked at the Feb. 3 council meeting. "And if we must, what is Tennessee Gas doing to protect us from these hazards?"

Tennessee Gas is proposing a new 2.1-mile, 12-inch "loop" pipeline paralleling Suffield Street from the compressor station to a point just west of Silver Lake, where it would join an existing pipeline. The new pipeline would run alongside an existing pipe, but the company needs to widen its right-of-way both temporarily, to accommodate construction, and permanently, to provide a buffer between the two pipes. There are about 15 landowners in the pipeline's path; Tennessee Gas has received easements from more than half of them, Hartman said.

The City Council is involved only because the town needs to grant easements for pipeline work on town-owned lands, including the Department of Public Works-Municipal Annex property. As the town property involved totals about half an acre of largely unbuildable land, Agawam would likely receive much less from an eminent domain judgment than the $150,000 that Mayor William Sapelli negotiated with Tennessee Gas, said Town Solicitor Stephen Buoniconti last week.

The pipelines are buried at a depth of 3 feet. Tennessee Gas is an interstate distribution network of high-pressure lines. Hartman said his company's pipes are safer than the low-pressure retail networks owned by local utilities such as Columbia Gas.

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Darcy Davis is pictured at home in 2016, with program books from band concerts and musicals he directed during a 36-year career at Agawam High School. FILE PHOTO

DAVIS from page 1

on not only the high school, but our community," Johnson said.

In 2016, the band shell at School Street Park — home of the annual SummerFest concert series and other musical performances — was named in Davis' honor, after a campaign by members of the AHS Band Parents Association.

Davis came from a musical family; his father, Darcy B. Davis Sr., was a band leader in Brattleboro, Vt. Darcy Jr. grew up in North Adams, Mass., and was a drummer in the band at Drury High School in that city.

Following service in the U.S. Army Air Corps and graduation from Williams College in 1948, Davis went to work as the music director and an English teacher at the private Tabor Academy in Marion, Mass. He later went to work at Boston University as assistant band director, and served as a judge for national band and drum corps contests. He would be elected to the Drum and Bugle Corps Hall of Fame in 1987.

At one of those contests, a participating band director suggested that Davis would be a good match for Agawam High School, which had an upcoming opening for a band leader. Davis took the job, but found on arrival that it had grown: "The principal said, 'Gee, we lost our chorus director, would you mind taking that over, too?' I didn't know too much about it. I had a lot of learning to do," he recalled in 2016.

He rose to the challenge, and learned another skill in 1957 when — having never seen a Broadway show before — he staged the first of Agawam High School's student musicals, "The Count and the Coed," taking advantage of the newly built high school auditorium.

One of Davis' proudest moments as band director came in 1962, when the Agawam High School Marching Band was selected to represent Massachusetts in a national parade in Mason City, Iowa, to celebrate the world premiere of the film "The Music Man." It was the start of what became a long line of appearances by Davis' Agawam bands at national festivals, parades and tournaments.

He fondly recalls the 1972 trip to Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia. On that trip that Davis coined a new name for the band. When the organizers of the North American Band Contest asked him what his group was called, he didn't want to call them the "Brownie Band," so — following a suggestion by his teenage son, Darcy G. Davis — he dubbed them the "Marching Mohawks," after the high school's Indian head mascot.

In addition to his son, who followed in his father's footsteps, becoming the band director at Rockville High School in Vernon, Conn., Davis is survived by his wife of 67 years, Ruth, and their daughter Lynn Davis of Boston. He also leaves two grandchildren, Hillary Davis Burgdorf and her husband Paul of Chicago, and Hannah Davis of Hartford.

Visiting hours are 4-6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, at Agawam Funeral Home, 184 Main St., Agawam. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 10, at First Baptist Church of Agawam, 760 Main St. The family asks that any donations in Darcy's memory be made to the Agawam High School Marching Band or the First Baptist Church of Agawam.

DEATH NOTICE

Davis, Darcy B., Jr.
Died Jan. 29
Memorial service Feb. 10
First Baptist Church of Agawam

Agawam Advertiser News

Obituary Policy

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary,** costing $100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Obituary

Darcy B. Davis Jr., 93

Darcy B. Davis Jr., 93, of Agawam, passed away peacefully on Jan. 29, surrounded by his family.



Darcy was born in North Adams, Mass., on Oct. 18, 1926, to the late Darcy B. Davis Sr. and Alice Davis of North Adams. He was a graduate of Drury High School in North Adams, and served in the U.S. Army Air Corps before graduating from Williams College.

Davis taught music at Tabor Academy in Marion, Mass., and the Bennington, Vt., public schools before moving to Agawam in 1955. During his 36-year teaching career in Agawam, Davis served as band director and supervisor of music for the Agawam public schools. Highlights of his career included his producing of over 20 Broadway musicals and leading the Agawam High School Band to numerous awards and achievements both locally and nationally. One of his proudest moments was the selection of the Agawam High School Band to represent the state of Massachusetts at the world premiere of "The Music Man" in Mason City, Iowa. Davis' legacy as "Agawam's Music Man" lives on through the many performances at the Darcy B. Davis Jr. Band Shell at School Street Park in Agawam.

A long-time participant in the drum and bugle corps movement, Davis came to national prominence as a member of the world champion Lt. Norman Prince Drum Corps, where he was one of their featured soloists. During this time, he won two national championships for individual bugle solo performance. For many years, he also served as an adjudicator at drum corps competitions in the Boston area. In 1987, Davis was elected to the Drum and Bugle Corps Hall of Fame.

During his retirement years, Davis continued his musical involvement, performing with the Marksmen Alumni Drum and Bugle Corps, the Memories Big Band in Somers, Conn., and the Agawam Senior Center Melody Band. He organized and directed the Agawam Senior Center Chorus, and was parade marshal for the daily afternoon parades at the Eastern States Exposition. In his free time, Darcy enjoyed playing the trumpet and the piano, collecting comic books, watching concerts, parades and UConn women's basketball games. He was most fond of spending time with his family and friends, especially his granddaughters, Hillary and Hannah.

Davis is survived by his wife of 67 years, Ruth, and two children, Darcy G. Davis and his wife Karen of Vernon, Conn., and Lynn Davis of Boston. He also leaves two grandchildren, Hillary Davis Burgdorf and her husband Paul of Chicago, and Hannah Davis of Hartford.

Visiting hours will be 4-6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, at Agawam Funeral Home, 184 Main St., Agawam. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 10, at the First Baptist Church of Agawam, 760 Main St. The family asks that any donations in Davis' memory be made to the Agawam High School Marching Band or the First Baptist Church of Agawam.

Catholic Healing Mass next week

On Tuesday, Feb. 11, Sacred Heart Parish in Feeding Hills will host its annual Mass of Healing and Anointing.

The observance of the World Day of the Sick was instituted in 1992 by Pope St. John Paul II who designated Feb. 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, as a special day in which to pray for those who are sick and suffering in any way.

All are invited to join in a special liturgy at 6 p.m. The Sacrament of the Sick will be available, as well as the opportunity to be prayed over by one of the many priests and deacons who have been invited to participate.

Following the Mass, there will be a reception at the Parish Center. The church is at 1065 Springfield St., Feeding Hills. Both the church and Parish Center are accessible for the physically challenged.

Worship this month with Wild Goose

Matthew 18:20 says, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." All are invited to join in song and prayer with Jack Yourous of Our Lady of the Lake in Southwick at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10, in the Sacred Heart Parish Center, 1061 Springfield St., Feeding Hills.

The group will also continue the rest of the series of the Wild Goose with the Rev. Dave Pivanka. This is a prayer group held on the second Monday of each month. Psalms 95:1 says, "Come, let us sing joy to the Lord, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our Salvation."

For more information, call Pastoral Minister Deb Briancesco at 413-786-8200, ext. 3.

Public Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by **Langonet Towing** pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **February 21, 2020 at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam** the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

1952 Chevy C10
VIN:
Justin Ayotte
451 Lake Road
West Suffield, CT 06093

2/06, 2/13/2020

AGAWAM
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT
LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, Dining Room, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA on **Monday, February 24, 2020 at 6:30PM** for all parties interested in the request of Robert Stephens, who is seeking a variance from the Town of Agawam's Zoning Ordinances, Chapter 180, Section 39(B) to construct a porch with less than the required front setback at the premises identified as 5 Kimberly Circle.

Doreen A. Prouty
Chairperson
2/06, 2/13/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD20C0023CA
In the matter of:
Jaseyier Jammel Bannister
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A **Petition to Change Name of Minor** has been filed by **Jaseyier Jammel Bannister of Agawam, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Jaseyier Elijah Guadeloupe
IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/25/2020**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland,** First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 28, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate
2/06/2020

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by **Langonet Towing** pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **February 14, 2020** at **63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam** the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

2003 Nissan Xterra
VIN: 5N1ED28Y53C644589
Daniel Mirolli
44 River Street
Agawam, MA 01001

2002 Infiniti I35
VIN: JNKDA31A22T018040
Robert Seegrave Jr.
19 Hamilton Circle
Feeding Hills, MA 01030

2005 Ford Taurus
VIN: 1FAHP53235A221866
Heidi Madeley
61 Center Street
Thomaston, CT 06787

1/30, 2/06, 2/13/2020

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by USA Towing, 71 Garden St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030, sale of a motor vehicle pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. C.255, Section 38A, that on the following date, February 28, 2020 at 8:00 a.m., at USA Towing, said motor vehicle will be sold at a private sale to satisfy the garage keeper's lien for towing, storage and costs of sale.

2008 VW Jetta
VIN: 3VWRZ71K18M082154
No plates with vehicle.
Name and address last known registered owner:
Gianfranco Scirococco
28 Grant St.
Agawam, MA 01001

2/06, 2/13, 2/20/2020

How to submit legal notices

All legal notices to be published in the Agawam Advertiser News should be sent directly to notices@turley.com. Please indicate the newspapers and publication date(s) for the notice(s) in the subject line of your email. For questions regarding coverage area, procedures or cost, please call Jamie Joslyn directly at 413-283-8393, ext. 216.

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Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

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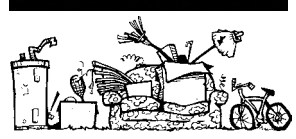
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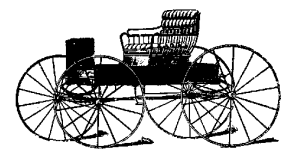
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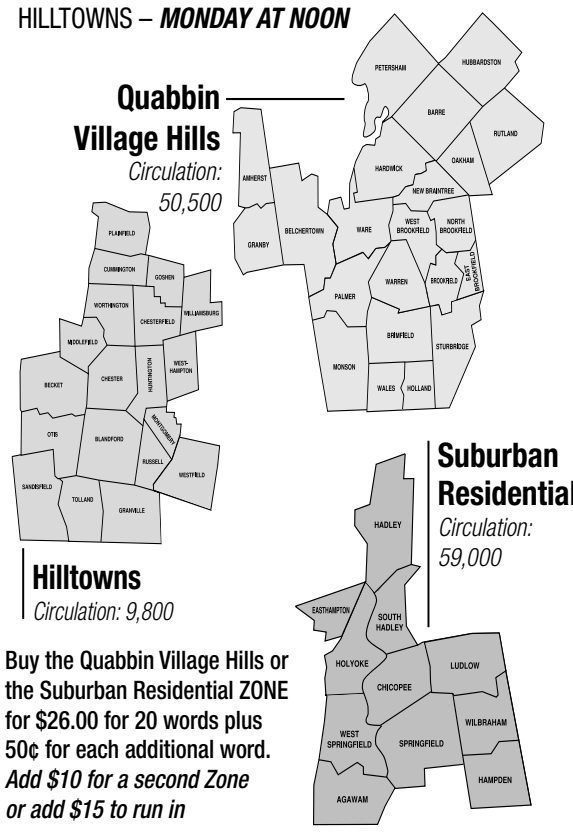
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LANGUAGE I from page 1

tive language isn't English or who don't speak English currently comprise about 9 percent of the nearly 4,000 students in the district. Martins added that 13 percent of the district's English learners are also on special education individualized education plans (IEPs).

Agawam's public schools serve 328 English learners today. Of those, 185 are in pre-kindergarten, with 12 students actively receiving ESL (English as a second language) services and 143 former English learners who are monitored for up to four years after exiting the program.

Martins said Robinson Park School has the highest number of active English learners among Agawam schools, with 48. The elementary schools have the most English learners and RPS also is the highest among the four schools. Phelps, the next highest, has 30, followed by Granger and Clark, with 26 and 23, respectively. The Early Childhood Center has 10, while Doering School has 13, Agawam Junior High School has 16, and Agawam High School has 19.

All schools except the ECC also have former English learners. The lowest number is at the elementary schools: Granger, 4; Clark, 5; RPS, 8; and Phelps, 12. AJHS and AHS have 16 and 7, respectively. The highest number is at Doering, which has 71.

Martins added that though the predominant native language of English learners in the state is Spanish, in Agawam, Russian is the predominant first language, accounting for 44 percent of English learners. It is followed by Ukrainian and Turkish at 11 percent, and 10 percent each for Spanish and Urdu, the official language of Pakistan. The remaining 13 percent includes a variety of other languages.

The ELE director said the district receives supplemental Title III funds to enhance programs already in place. Funds help pay for resources, such as textbooks, to assist English learners in becoming fluent in English as well as meeting state academic standards.

To identify and assess the proficiency of English learners, Agawam uses the state's screening and assessment program, which is similar to the MCAS. The annual program measures their skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing to determine progress and placement.

Martins said proficiency levels for English learners range from a 1.0 level when students are new to school to a 6.0 level when they are fluent in English. She said students typically exit the program and no longer receive direct services when they reach the 4.2 level. The average length of time in the program is six years.

As of spring 2019, about 13 percent of English learners became former English learners. At that time, the largest percentage of active English learners, 37 percent, was at level 3, followed by 27 percent at level 4. Students in levels 1 and 2 were 16 percent and 13 percent, respectively. The fewest number of students, just 6 percent, was in level 5.

Martins, who previously served for one year as the part-time ELE director, became the district's first full-time ELE director in September. She oversees ESL teachers and paraprofessionals in the district as well as four interpreters. Martins joined the district in 2013 as a K-4 ESL teacher.

School Superintendent Steve Lemanski said having a full-time director means there are "many things out there that we may not have needed in the past that we now need, including translation services for parents."

Lemanski said there's a "huge" need for translation services because parents might not get messages from school when their children get home. He said the district recently sent information on reunification procedures to parents in seven different languages. The superintendent added that the district will be doing more things to communicate better with parents.

"With 328 English learners, there are more and more people who need our help," he said.

Since becoming director, Martins has presented 15 professional development workshops to all staff on diverse learners with special needs and assisting English learners with academic skills in math and science. She also has helped to create two new initiatives at the high school.

The first is a "Seal of Biliteracy" award for graduating seniors who demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages. The program promotes bilingual programs, encourages students to sign up for world language courses, and advocates for more students to become bilingual.

The second initiative is an internship program for speakers of French, Spanish, Russian or Albanian. It allows students with an interest in education to provide peer support for younger English learners at Doering, RPS and Granger.

"This gives them an opportunity to see what ESL teachers do by working with that group of students to utilize their bilingual skills — which is great," said Martins.

How English learners are identified

During her presentation last Tuesday to the School Committee about Agawam's English Learner Education program, English Language Education Director Ashley Martins explained how English learners are defined and identified.

She said English learners are defined by state law as "a student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English." They also may be referred to as "limited English proficient" in legal documents.

To identify English learners, Martins said the district takes the following steps:

- Parents complete a home language survey
- A certified educator screens for the English proficiency of a student when the answer to any of the questions on the survey is a language other than English.
- A language team determines whether the student is an English learner using screening test results and makes an initial placement decision. Students identified as English learners are placed in a Structured English Immersion classroom where they will also receive English as a second language instruction from licensed ESL teachers.
- Parents or legal guardians are notified of screening test results and the initial placement decision. Parents are informed of their right to opt out of services.

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